

SELECT REVIEWS,

FOR NOVEMBER, 1810.

FROM THE MONTHLY REVIEW.

Voyages dans l'Amérique Méridionale, &c. i. e. Travels in South America, by Don Felix de Azara, Commissioner and Superintendant of the Lines of the Spanish Frontiers in Paraguay, from 1781 to 1801; containing a geographical, political, and civil Description of Paraguay, and the River Plata; an Account of the Discovery and Conquest of those Countries; various Details relative to their Natural History, and the Savage Tribes which inhabit them; a Statement of the Methods employed by the Jesuits to subject and civilize the Natives, &c. Published from the Author's Manuscripts, with a Sketch of his Life and Writings. By C. A. Walckenaer; and enriched with Notes by G. Cuvier, Perpetual Secretary to the Class of Physical Sciences in the Institute, &c. To which is added the Natural History of the Birds of Paraguay and La Plata. By the same Author, translated from the original Spanish, and augmented by a great Number of Notes. By M. Sonnini. Accompanied with an Atlas, containing Twenty-five plates 4 Vols. 8vo. and 4to. Atlas. Paris. 1809. Price Four Guineas.

THE favourable notice which Don Felix de Azara's communications have obtained on the other side of the water, and the signal opportunities which he enjoyed for directing his extended observation to tracts of country which have been very imperfectly explored, and which are destined, perhaps, to undergo new and important political revolutions, induced us to open these volumes with no ordinary degree of eagerness and expectation. After a candid perusal of the whole, it behoves us to state that our gratification has not been unmingled with disappointment. Yet the work, with all its defects, bespeaks a vigorous, independent, and active mind, comprises a rich diversity of materials, and has powerful claims on our deliberate attention. The whole of vo-

lume I. and nearly two thirds of the second, are occupied by the travels; the remaining part of the second is allotted to an introductory view of the natural history of Cochabamba and a description of its productions, by Don Tadeo Haenke, member of the academies of sciences at Vienna and Prague; and the third and fourth contain the ornithology of Paraguay and la Plata. The French editor would probably have performed a more acceptable service to the publick, if he had either printed the travels separately, or had incorporated, in the present work, the author's account of the quadrupeds of Paraguay, with the requisite corrections and annotations: or, assuming the writings of the Spaniard as the basis of his plan, he might have worked them into a more seemly fabrick.

As the publication now stands, the natural history department is very incomplete, allusions being frequently made to another book, which is not within our reach; and the notices of the quadrupeds are scanty and unsatisfactory, because they were avowedly penned with a reference to prior and more ample details. Part of the information contained in the biographical sketch is repeated in the letters prefixed to the work; and several vague and crude statements have been retained in the text, without comment or apology. The author may, nevertheless, regard with self complacency the association of his name with those of *Walckenaer*, *Cuvier*, and *Sonnini*; and the diffusion of his volumes through the medium of a language which is familiar to the scholars and the philosophers of Europe.

His editor informs us that Don Felix was born at Barbunales, near Balbastro, in Arragon, on the 18th of May, 1746. A few days previously to this event, his parents, who lived in happy retirement on their estate, had sent their eldest son, Don Nicholas, to the university of Salamanca. Don Felix commenced his literary career in that of Huesca; and, when he had completed his course in philosophy, he entered the military academy of Barcelona. In the latter city, these two brothers, who had never seen each other, enjoyed an affectionate but transient interview; and they did not meet again till the expiration of thirty-five years. In 1764, Don Felix was appointed a cadet in the Galician regiment of infantry; in 1767, ensign in the corps of engineers, and in 1775, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant. In this capacity he signalized his courage in an expedition against Algiers, and received a dangerous wound from a large copper ball, which shattered one of his ribs, and, to all appearance, deprived him of life. Owing, however, to the kind attention of a friend, and the bold-

ness of a sailor who cut out the ball with a knife, he gradually recovered, after having endured the most excruciating pain, as it was necessary to extract a considerable portion of the rib. The wound did not close till five years afterward: at the same distance of time, it broke out afresh, and thus naturally made way for the remaining fragment of the injured bone. He was then in America, and secluded from all the assistance of art: but the wound healed spontaneously. When roaming in the wilds of the same country, he broke his collar-bone by a fall from his horse, and again recovered without having recourse to any external application. With these accidental exceptions, and another which we shall presently mention, he seems to have enjoyed the most uninterrupted good health.

"I was accustomed to eat bread," says he, in a letter to his editor, "till I had reached my twenty fifth year, without any particular inclination for that species of food: but having experienced at that period of my life great difficulty of digestion, attended with symptoms of general indisposition, especially after dinner, I consulted a skilful physician at Madrid, who surmised that my complaints originated in the use of bread, and advised me to give it up. I did so. My sickness quickly vanished; and, from that time, I have never been indisposed. The want of bread has given me a higher relish for other kinds of aliment, than I felt when I blended them with that general article of human food. I am not in the habit of using any substitute for bread: but I am sensible that I am somewhat more partial to vegetables and fish than to butcher's meat. For the rest, it is not extraordinary that I should abstain from bread, since the inhabitants of the countries which I have traversed are alike strangers to it, though they live as long as we do, and even longer."

From this, and various instances which have come within our own knowledge, we have reason to believe that esculent roots are generally more light and nourishing than the most elaborate preparations of farinaceous plants.

By the treaty of Idelfonso, the courts of Spain and Portugal had mutually stipulated to name commissioners for the final definition and adjustment of their respective lines of demarcation in South America. Don Felix de Azara, with the rank of lieutenant colonel of engineers, was one of those who were deputed by the Spanish government to direct the execution of these arrangements, and he set sail accordingly in 1781. By the chicanery of the Portuguese commissioners, however, the business was studiously protracted; till Don Felix, perceiving that his official services were unavailing, boldly projected a geographical survey of that vast country, of which he had been instructed to ascertain only the boundaries. Undismayed by the certain expense, trouble, fatigue, and danger, which were attendant on an operation of such magnitude and detail, and regardless of the secret or the avowed opposition which he might expect to encounter from the Spanish viceroys, he steadily persevered, during thirteen years, in the prosecution of his scheme; and, owing to the resources of his own unshaken mind, and the zeal of the officers who acted under him, he finally triumphed over every obstacle.

"He provided himself with brandy, glass beads, ribands, knives, and other trinkets, in order to gain the good will of the savages. The whole of his personal baggage consisted of a few clothes, a little coffee, and salt, with tobacco and the Paraguay herb for his attendants. The latter carried with them only the clothes which they wore. But they took with them a great many horses, regulating the number by the length of the journey, and fixing the proportion sometimes at twelve for each individual. These were by no means requisite for conveying the baggage, which was very trifling; but horses, it should be observed, are extremely common in these countries, occasion no trouble, because they receive only such food as they pick up themselves during the night, and are very easily fatigued. The travellers were also accompanied by large dogs.

"They rose an hour before daybreak to prepare breakfast. After this repast, individuals were detached from the troop to collect the horses which were dispersed in the neighbourhood, and sometimes even at a league's distance, because, except those which each person retained close by him, during the night, they roamed and fed quite at large. As soon as the horses were reassembled, each person let loose the animal which had served him for twenty-four hours; when the whole troop formed a circle round the relay-horses, to prevent their escape, while a man advanced into the circle, and, by means of a noose, laid hold of such as were necessary for the journey. Finally, all put themselves in motion two hours after sunrise. As there are no open roads in these deserts, a guide, well acquainted with the country, marched three hundred paces ahead, and quite alone, that his attention might not be diverted by conversation of any kind. After him came the relay-horses, which, in turn, were followed by the main body of the travellers; and thus the party continued its progress, without stopping, till two hours before sunset.

"They then selected, for a halting station, the neighbourhood of some marsh or rivulet; and men were despatched, in different directions, to procure wood for fuel, and to catch cows for food, either from among the wild cattle in the plains, or from those which belonged to some habitation, if any such occurred within the distance of two or three leagues. In case these wild cows should fail, others followed in the rear of the troop. In some districts, a sufficient number of armadillos were procured for the subsistence of the whole company. To provide against the eventual failure of all these resources in a projected line of route, they previously laid in a stock of cows' flesh, which they cut into very long shreds, of the thickness of a man's finger, dried them in the sun, and conveyed them in packages on their horses, being the only sort of food which they carried along with them. They ate it when roasted on wooden skewers, the only mode of preparing meat in these countries, which forms the sole food of the inhabitants.

"Previously to encamping on any spot, they were obliged to take precautions against the vipers, which are often very numerous. With this view, they led out all the horses on the space which they intended to occupy, so as either to crush these reptiles, or to induce such of them as lurked under the grass to come out; an expedient to which the lives of a few

horses were occasionally sacrificed. On retiring to rest, every individual spread a piece of cowskin on the ground. M. de Azara was the only person who had a hammock suspended to stakes, or trees. During the night, every body kept his horse near to his person, that, in case of need, he might effect his escape from wild beasts. The approach of the latter was always announced by the dogs, which scented them at a great distance, because they exhale a very strong odour. In spite of every attention, it often happened that several vipers glided into the camp, but they usually lay concealed and quiet under the cows' hides on which the people slept. They sometimes passed near to or even over the men, without doing the smallest harm; for they never bite but when disturbed.

"This order of march was observed only in those tracts in which no apprehensions were entertained from the savage Indians. Where he had reason to dread their encounter, M. de Azara had recourse to other precautions; he moved only in the night time; he despatched scouts in every direction to explore the proper line of march; two patrols proceeded on each side of the troop; and each kept his rank, and had his arms in readiness. In spite of all this prudence and discretion, he was frequently attacked, and had the misfortune to lose some of his men."

In the midst of these laborious and perilous wanderings, geometrical calculations, and the details that were inseparable from the pursuit of his primary object, the intrepid Spaniard contrived to bestow a considerable portion of his attention on the quadrupeds and birds which were peculiar to these regions. He at first made war on these animals, solely for the purpose of preserving their skins, and transmitting them to Europe: but, perceiving that they were soon injured by keeping, he adopted the plan of minutely describing each individual in its recent state. From the rapid accumulation of his descriptions, he was frequently at a loss to know whether he had not previously characterized certain specimens; and therefore, in order to obviate repetitions, he distributed his stores into groupes, each of which he distinguished by general characters; thus simplifying and reducing

his labour, relieving his recollection, acquiring more promptitude of discrimination, and exhibiting a pleasing example of an individual mind devising that mode of procedure which the science of ages has consecrated and improved. He had not long persevered in thus methodising the objects of his investigation, when chance threw in his way a Spanish translation of the works of Buffon. We need not say with what assiduity he perused or rather devoured the whole. But, should the strictures, which he had hazarded on the pages of that illustrious author, appear to some persons either needlessly multiplied, or expressed in terms rather pointedly severe, the peculiar circumstances in which he was unavoidably placed, his extreme solicitude for the discovery of truth, and his long seclusion from the resources of European literature, as well as from the urbanity of European manners, may be allowed to disarm the censure of the fastidious. We may add that his descriptions and remarks were originally destined for the perusal and revision of Buffon himself; and intended to be inserted, as supplementary matter, in his celebrated work, instead of forming a separate publication. M. de Azara's descriptions of the external forms of quadrupeds and birds evince much patient observation, while his account of their internal dispositions and habits cannot fail at once to excite and to fix the attention of the curious.

It would be equally foreign to our purpose and disgusting to our readers, to recite the base and unworthy artifices by which the Spanish viceroy endeavoured to sully and obscure the fair reputation of the traveller. The injustice and ingratitude of his superiors (were they entitled to that appellation?) diminished not the zeal with which he executed their commands. When specially charged with the survey of the dreary waste on the southern coast, he shrunk not from the task, though

he was aware that the performance of it would expose him to the daily attacks of ferocious savages called Pampas. He was also intrusted with the command of the Brazilian frontier, which he was directed to explore, and to free from the Portuguese settlers. He was moreover enjoined to visit the harbours of the Plata, and to draw up a plan of defence, in the event of an attack on the part of the English. At the request of the viceroys, he composed various representations and memoirs relative to the administration of publick affairs; and, among other schemes of salutary reform, he recommended the emancipation of the civilized Indians. Towards the close of his residence in America, he provided settlements for many families who had migrated from old Spain under the auspices of government, with the view of colonizing the shores of Patagonia, but whom the supineness or the incapacity of the viceroy of Buenos Ayres allowed to languish without occupation, and to subsist on the publick treasury.

The long oblivion of the complicated and meritorious services of the subject of these notices, at length drew to a period; for, in 1789, he was promoted to the rank of captain in the navy;* and, in 1801, he obtained, what he had often solicited in vain, permission to revisit his native country. There he availed himself of an early opportunity of committing to the press his history of the quadrupeds and birds of South America; which, in affectionate and pathetick terms, he dedicated to his brother, Don Nicholas, then residing at Paris, in the character of ambassador from the court of Madrid. When he arrived in the French capital, the author divided his time between his brother's society and the study of Natural History.

"On the 5th of October," says M. Walckenaer, "the king of Spain had ad-

vanced him to the rank of brigadier general in the army. In proportion, however, as his brother cherished the intimacy of his friendship, the more powerfully he felt the force of an attachment with which disparity of years blended something like paternal fondness. In short, he was easily persuaded to resign his new dignity, and to live under the same roof with his elder brother. Alas! he did not long enjoy the happiness of this devotion of his existence to fraternal affection. On the 26th January 1803, he saw with the deepest affliction that beloved brother, to whom he had sacrificed all the hopes of ambition, and all the splendour of preferment, expire in his arms."

"The king of Spain recalled the survivor, and fixed him in his own capital, by appointing him a member of a military board, whose functions had a reference to the affairs of the two Indies.

"No great length of time has elapsed since I could have concluded this sketch with the gratifying intelligence that Don Felix at last enjoyed, in the bosom of his country, that repose which he had so dearly earned; but I have, since that period, vainly employed all the means in my power to learn the history of his fortunes, and to present him with the joint tribute of his own labours. With painful emotions I must now consign to the press those pages, which it was my happiness to trace."

This abrupt and mysterious termination of a friendly correspondence would almost tempt us to apprehend, that the romantick and high toned sentiments of the generous Spaniard may have involved his fate in the miseries of his much injured country.

In the course of his introduction, the author takes occasion to state that his investigations were not limited to geographical surveys:

"Finding myself," says he, "in a vast country which I conceived to be unknown, almost wholly ignorant of European transactions, deprived of books, and of agreeable and instructive conversation, I could scarcely find any source of employment but in the objects which nature offered to my contemplation. Hence, I felt myself, in some measure, compelled to obey her call; and I perceived at every step beings which arrested my attention, because they

* This appointment of a colonel of engineers to be a captain in the navy, will appear singular to the English reader.

appeared new to me. I thought it would be convenient, and even necessary, to note my observations and the reflections which they suggested. Distrust, indeed, on the ground of ignorance, checked this idea, and induced the persuasion that my alleged discoveries had been already completely described by the historians, travellers, and naturalists, who had written on America. Besides, I could not dissemble that a man in my insulated situation, overwhelmed with fatigue, busied with geography and other indispensable details, and destitute of assistance and advice, must be altogether incapable of describing objects so numerous, and so much varied. Yet I resolved to observe every thing which my capacity, leisure, and circumstances would permit; committing all my remarks to writing, and suspending their publication till I should be relieved from the pressure of official business.

"After my return to Europe, I deemed it improper to withhold my observations from the learned and curious. They will easily perceive that I possess no knowledge relative to the characteristic of earths, or stones, vegetables, fishes, insects, or reptiles, and that I have not bestowed on these subjects all the time that I could have wished to have devoted to them: but I have great reliance on their sagacity for supplying my deficiencies in these respects. My statements of facts, however, they may rest assured, are wholly unmingled with exaggeration or conjecture; since I assert nothing which I have not seen, and which any individual may not verify by his own observation, or through the medium of the inhabitants of the country. With respect to the inferences which I sometimes deduce from these facts, my readers will assent to such as are properly founded, while they are perfectly at liberty to abandon those of an opposite description, and to suggest others more deserving of attention; in which latter case I shall be the first to approve."

Don Felix informs us, moreover, that he not only directed his attention to the ancient traditions of the country, but perused a large portion of the civil archives of assumption, several of the documents contained in those of Buenos Ayres, Corrientes, Santa Fé, and all the early memoirs relative to the colonies and parishes; by which means he has been enabled to correct the many errors of De

Vaca, Herrera, Schimidels, Centenera, Guzman, Lozano, and Guevera. To his short catalogue raisonné of these writers, the editor has subjoined a few supplementary notices in the margin.

The first of the present volumes contains nine chapters, which treat of the climate and winds; the disposition and qualities of the soil; salts, and minerals; the principal rivers and harbours; fishes; wild and cultivated vegetables; insects, reptiles, quadrupeds, and birds. The remarks on climate and winds, which have chiefly a reference to Assumption and Buenos Ayres, are too vague and desultory to afford much satisfaction to the meteorological student. We are presented with no tabular view of the degrees of heat and cold, or the quantity of rain, &c. and even a thermometer appears to have been often wanting. Thunder storms are very frequent, and sometimes attended with destructive consequences. During the author's residence in Paraguay, many individuals were killed by lightning; and, in a single storm, which occurred on the 21st of January, 1793, the lightning fell thirty-seven times within the town of Buenos Ayres, and killed nineteen persons.

Owing to the general and extensive flatness of these countries, the smaller rivers are arrested and evaporated before they reach the sea; and the lakes, which are very numerous, and occasionally also very extensive, are remarkably shallow. Though that of Xarayes, for example, is presumed to measure 110 leagues in length, and 40 in breadth, it is no where navigable, and is evaporated to complete dryness during the greater part of the year. "Some of the old writers believed that it was the source of the river Paraguay, whereas the fact is precisely the reverse; others, who took a pleasure in forging tales, have asserted that in the centre of this lake existed the empire of the Xarayes, or of el Do-

rado, or of Paytiti; and they have embellished this falsehood by other fables, still more unaccountable." The quantity of soil that is flooded by these vast pieces of water, the impracticability of drainage and irrigation in boundless tracts of dead level, and the sand stone rock, which stretches over all the flats on the east of the Paraguay and Parana, present insuperable obstacles to extensive vegetation and culture. The following particulars it will be proper to mention, as nearly as we can, in the author's own language.

"On the north of the river Plata, or in the plains of Monte Video and Maldonado, I have observed that the herds search for, and eat with avidity, dried bones; that, in proportion as they advance northward, they eat a species of earth called *Barrero*, which is a salt clay found in the ditches; and that, when this fails (which happens in the eastern districts of Paraguay and the Missions of Uruguay) cattle of all kinds infallibly perish at the expiration of four months. We can scarcely conceive the eagerness which the herds manifest in seeking for and devouring this salt argillaceous earth. If they discover it after a month's privation, they are not to be driven from it by blows; and by indulging in it to excess they sometimes die of indigestion. I have been assured that the birds and quadrupeds of this country, which feed on vegetables, manifest the same propensity; and I can, at least, personally vouch for a great quantity of salt in the stomach of the Tapir. From these facts, I

conclude that the pastures of the countries in question are incapable of supporting any species of cattle, without the addition of salt, or salted clay: but that the freshness of the herbage diminishes from the Missions to the river Plata. In Brazil, notwithstanding the luxuriance of the pasture, it is found impossible to rear cattle without salt; and since none is found in the country, and it is all imported from Europe, it forms a very expensive article, being sold on account of government."

The state of things is quite reversed in the whole of Chaco, or in the region situated to the west of the Paraguay and Parana, and from the Plata southwards; every rivulet, lake, and well, being brackish in summer. Even the rivers partake of this quality when their waters are low.

Don Felix de Azara is very sparing of his notices concerning fossil productions, and communicates no information relative to the stratification of the districts which he traversed. His account of the celebrated mass of native iron, in the plains of Chaco, does not materially differ from that of Don Rubin de Celis, though his mode of explaining the phenomenon may be allowed to be his own: he says, "I am inclined to believe that it is as ancient as the world, and that it proceeded in its present form from the hands of the Creator."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

FROM THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.

The Speeches of the Honourable Thomas Erskine (now Lord Erskine) when at the Bar, on Subjects connected with the Liberty of the Press, and against Constructive Treasons. Collected by James Ridgeway. 2 vol. 8vo. p. 854. London. 1810.

WE regard the publication of this collection as an event of great importance, both in a literary and political view. The orations which have been given to the world in modern times, under the sanction of the person who delivered them, or in such a manner as to secure a tolerable share of correctness, are lamentably

few. Perhaps Mr. Burke's are the only speeches of note which have been printed in an authentick shape, in an age teeming with orators, and, though prolifick of much bad eloquence, adorned by some of the greatest geniuses that ever practised this divine art. When we consider how great the difference is between

ancient and modern eloquence; how much of that which peculiarly marks the latter, was utterly unknown to the ancients; we mean, the extemporaneous reasoning and declamation known by the name of *debating*; and when we reflect how much more adapted this talent is to the business of real life than the elaborate and ornate compositions of antiquity; we cannot fail to lament, that almost all our great masters of the art have died, without leaving a trace of their genius behind them; and that if, unhappily, the free constitution of England were destroyed, the speeches of Mr. Burke alone would leave to posterity any means of conjecturing what powers had been exerted to avert its fate. To those immortal specimens of modern popular eloquence, must now be added the most perfect examples of the eloquence of the bar which are to be found in any age; for the volumes before us both collect and preserve the fugitive publications of Mr. Erskine's speeches formerly in circulation, and add, in a correct and authentick form, several which had been most scantily and inaccurately reported.

These volumes, which, we rejoice to learn, will be followed by another, embrace the most celebrated speeches, from the case of captain Baillie, in 1779, when Mr. Erskine, in the very outset of his brilliant career, astonished the legal world with a display of talents, which was outshone, indeed, but not obscured, by his own riper efforts, down to his celebrated defence of Mr. Perry in 1793, when, having long stood unrivalled among English lawyers for eloquence; for skill and conduct; for knowledge of the constitutional law of the realm; and for dauntless love of liberty, he put forth his matured genius with a power that carried every thing before it, and bore down the utmost efforts of the court against the independence of the British press. The speeches are twelve in number; and they are prefaced

with such explanations of the subjects, extracts from the pleadings, and reports of the speeches of the crown lawyers to whom Mr. Erskine replied, as serve to render the matter of them perfectly intelligible to every reader. Where it is of importance, the address of the judge to the jury is likewise inserted; and many anecdotes which occurred at the trials are added; with the verdict; motions in arrest of judgment, and conversations at delivering the verdict, where any thing of this kind took place. The prefatory statements are very well, and, as far as we happen to know, very faithfully executed. We have understood, that the publick is indebted for them, and indeed for this publication, to a gentleman of the profession. Mr. Erskine himself, we believe, revised many of his speeches at the time of their original publication—at least we have heard so; and, from the character of accuracy which they here bear, we are inclined to believe the report. By rather a singular omission in so careful a compilation, no table of contents is given to these volumes. We shall therefore give a list of the speeches contained in them. The first is that in captain Baillie's case, in the Court of King's Bench. Then follows the speech for Carnan, at the bar of the house of commons, against the monopoly of the two universities in printing almanacks. Next come: the famous speech for Lord George Gordon at the Old Bailey; the speeches for the dean of St. Asaph, at Shrewsbury assizes, at the motion in the King's Bench for a new trial, and afterwards in support of the rule, with a note of his speech in arrest of judgment, in the same noted case. These close the first volume. The second begins with the speech for Paine; after which comes the speech, rather more popular at the time, against the publisher of the *Age of Reason*—and which finds a place here somewhat strangely, as it was not

delivered for years after the period where these volumes end, and should have come into a subsequent part of the publication. The speech in Stockdale's case follows; and then those for Messrs. Frost and Perry; with which the second volume concludes.

In these volumes, we have a complete body of the law of libel, and a most perfect history of its progress, down to the libel bill of Mr. Fox, which owed its origin, indeed, to the doubts and difficulties that arose during the prosecution [is there not an error in the first syllable?] of the dean of St. Asaph. The argument on the rights of juries, as connected with that case, affords the clearest exposition of the subject, and is, in itself, by far the most learned commentary on the nature of that inestimable mode of trial, which is any where to be found. Mr. Fox's bill is merely declaratory of the principles, which were laid down in this argument with unrivalled clearness, and enforced with a power of reasoning which none ever denied to this great advocate, except in the moment when, dazzled by the astonishing powers of his language, they were tempted to fancy, that so rare a union of different qualities was not in nature; and to doubt whether such eloquence and fire, so lively an imagination, and so great warmth of passions, were compatible with the faculties of close reasoning, and nice discrimination. As connected, then, with the history of jury trial; as laying down its principles; as furnishing the groundwork of Mr. Fox's famous bill; and as having, in point of fact, given occasion to that bill, we view the speeches for dean Shipley, which contain a most complete history of that case, as the most important part of this collection. We need scarcely add, that the trial by jury is here only viewed in its relation to the law of libel; but, to administer this law, is, beyond all comparison, the most im-

portant office of juries—the one in which the excellence of that institution is most conspicuous and indisputable, and, independent of which, the objections to it would be neither few nor light. Of the speeches now described we purpose to say nothing more at present. They are so well known, and so often referred to, that we need not dwell upon them in this place.

In the importance of the occasion, and of its consequences to the liberties of Englishmen, we cannot hesitate in placing the defence of lord George Gordon in the next rank. This great speech, and the acquittal which it secured to the object of it, were the deathblow of the tremendous doctrine of *constructive treason*. Lord George Gordon's, indeed, may be called the case of constructive treasons; and, after its decision, that engine of oppression lay at rest for a series of years, till the season of alarm, which, with all other monstrous and unutterable things, arose out of the French revolution, seemed to furnish a fit opportunity for reviving the times of legal oppression and injustice, under colour of law. In that inauspicious era, this most perilous doctrine once more found, in the same consummate advocate, an enemy so irresistible, that again it utterly failed, though brought forward with every chance in its favour, from the temper of the times; the power of the crown; the madness of the country; the folly of the mob; and the talents of Mr. Erskine's political enemies and professional rivals. We shall have an opportunity of contemplating this, the greatest of all his victories, with more advantage, when the speeches in 1794 are added to the collection. At present, our attention is confined to the defence of lord George Gordon.

From this we are unable to extract any passages which can give a just notion of its character and high merits; for these consist, not in dazzling sentences, nor in parti-

cular bursts of eloquence, but in the close texture of the whole argument, both where Mr. Erskine lays down the principles of treason law, skilfully adapting them to his purpose, by bringing forward such parts chiefly as suit his case, and illustrating them by a reference to circumstances like those he had himself to deal with, and where he more particularly and more directly makes the application of those doctrines to the charges against lord George Gordon. The whole speech must be read, and even carefully studied, before a just sense of the talents displayed in it can be entertained, or a conjecture formed of its great effects upon the audience who heard it, and the tribunal to which it was addressed. We shall here only give a passage from the conclusion, because its diction is peculiarly beautiful and chaste, and the topicks highly persuasive.

"What, then, has produced this trial for high treason; or given it, when produced, the seriousness and solemnity it wears?—What, but the inversion of all justice, by judging from *consequences*, instead of from *causes* and *designs*?—what but the artful manner in which the crown has endeavoured to blend the petitioning in a body, and the zeal with which an animated disposition conducted it, with the melancholy crimes that followed?—crimes, which the shameful indolence of our magistrates; which the total extinction of all police and government suffered to be committed in broad day, and in the delirium of drunkenness, by an unarmed banditti, without a head, without plan or object, and without a refuge from the instant gripe of justice; a banditti, with whom the associated protestants and their president had no manner of connexion, and whose cause they overturned, dishonoured, and ruined.

"How unchristian then is it to attempt, without evidence, to infect the imaginations of men who are sworn dispassionately and disinterestedly to try the trivial offence, of assembling a multitude with a petition to repeal a law (which has happened so often in all our memories) by blending it with the fatal catastrophe, on which every man's mind may be supposed to retain some degree of irritation? *O fie!*

O fie! Is the intellectual seat of justice to be thus impiously shaken? Are your benevolent propensities to be thus disappointed and abused? Do they wish you, while you are listening to the evidence, to connect it with unforeseen consequences, in spite of reason and truth? Is it their object to hang the millstone of prejudice around his innocent neck to sink him? If there be such men, may Heaven forgive them for the attempt, and inspire you with fortitude and wisdom to discharge your duty with calm, steady, and reflecting minds.

"Gentlemen, I have no manner of doubt that you will. I am sure you cannot but see, notwithstanding my great inability, increased by a perturbation of mind (arising, thank God! from no dishonest cause) that there has been not only no evidence on the part of the crown, to fix the guilt of the late commotions upon the prisoner, but that, on the contrary, we have been able to resist the *probability*—I might almost say the *possibility*—of the charge, not only by living witnesses, whom we only ceased to call, because the trial would never have ended, but by the evidence of all the blood that has paid the forfeit of that guilt already; an evidence that, I will take upon me to say, is the strongest, and most unanswerable, which the combination of natural events ever brought together since the beginning of the world for the deliverance of the oppressed—since, in the late numerous trials for acts of violence and depredation, though conducted by the ablest servants of the crown, with a laudable eye to the investigation of the subject which now engages us, no one fact appeared which showed any plan, any object, any leader—since, out of forty-four thousand persons who signed the petition of the protestants, *not one* was to be found among those who were convicted, tried, or even apprehended on suspicion—and since, out of all the felons who were let loose from prisons, and who assisted in the destruction of our property, not a single wretch was to be found, who could even attempt to save his own life by the plausible promise of giving evidence to day.

"What can overturn such a proof as this! Surely a good man might, without superstition, believe, that such a union of events was something more than natural, and that the Divine Providence was watchful for the protection of innocence and truth.

"I may now, therefore, relieve you from the pain of hearing me any longer, and be myself relieved from speaking on

a subject which agitates and distresses me. Since lord George Gordon stands clear of every hostile act or purpose against the legislature of his country, or the properties of his fellow subjects; since the whole tenour of his conduct repels the belief of the *traitorous intention* charged by the indictment; my task is finished. I shall make no address to your passions; I will not remind you of the long and rigorous imprisonment he has suffered; I will not speak to you of his great youth, of his illustrious birth, and of his uniformly animated and generous zeal in parliament for the constitution of his country. Such topics might be useful in the balance of a doubtful case; yet, even then, I should have trusted to the honest hearts of Englishmen to have felt them without excitation. At present, the plain and rigid rules of justice and truth, are sufficient to entitle me to your verdict." I. 132—135.

A singular passage, to be found in this speech, affords a great contrast to the calm, and even mild tone of its peroration. It is, indeed, as far as we know, the only instance of the kind in the history of modern eloquence; and we might justly have doubted, if even Mr. Erskine's skill and well known discretion as a public speaker had not forsaken him, and allowed his heat and fancy to hurry him somewhat too far, had we not, in the traditional account of the perfect success which attended this passage, the most unequivocal evidence in his favour. After reciting a variety of circumstances in lord George's conduct, and quoting the language which he used, the orator, suddenly, abruptly, and violently, breaks out with this exclamation:—*"I say, BY GOD, that man is a ruffian, who shall, after this, presume to build upon such honest, artless, conduct, as an evidence of guilt!"* [vol. I. p. 125.] The sensation produced by these words, and by the magick of the voice, the eye, the face, the figure, and all we call the manner, with which they were uttered, is related, by those present on this great occasion, to have been quite electrical, and to baffle all power of description. The feeling of the moment alone; that sort of

sympathy which subsists between an observant speaker and his audience, which communicates to him, as he goes on, their feelings under what he is saying; decyphers the language of their looks; and even teaches him, without regarding what he sees, to adapt his words to the state of their minds, by merely attending to his own—this intuitive and momentary impulse could alone have prompted a flight, which it alone could sustain; and as its failure would, indeed, have been fatal, so its eminent success must be allowed to rank it among the most famous feats of oratory.

The speech which we are inclined to rank the next in importance, but the first in oratorical talent, and happily the most accurately reported and revised, is the celebrated defence of Stockdale, whose trial may be termed the case of libels; for in it we have clearly laid down, and most powerfully enforced, the doctrine which now enters into every such question; viz. that if, taking all the parts of a composition together, it shall not be found to exceed the bounds of a free and fair discussion; so fair as a regard to good order, the peace of society, and the security of the government requires; but so free as the nature of our happy constitution, and the unalienable right of Englishmen to canvass public affairs, allows; if, in short, the discussion be, upon the whole, sufficiently decent in its language, and peaceable in its import, although marked with great freedom of opinion, and couched in terms as animated as a free man can use, on a subject that interests him deeply; although even a great share of heat should be found in the expression, and such invective as, surpassing the bounds of candour and of charity, can only be excused by the violence of honest feelings; nay, although detached passages may be pitched upon, in their nature and separate capacity amounting to libels; yet these also shall be overlooked, and

the defendant acquitted, on the ground that he has only used the grand right of political discussion with uncommon vehemence. This great doctrine, now on the whole generally received, was first fully expounded in the defence of Stockdale; and it forms obviously the foundation of whatever is more than a mere name in the liberty of the press, the first and proudest pre-eminence of this country over all the rest of Europe.

While the trial of Mr. Hastings was going on, Mr. Stockdale, a bookseller in London, published a pamphlet, written by the late Mr. Logan, one of the ministers of Leith, and a gentleman of very distinguished genius. It was a defence of Mr. Hastings; and, in the course of it, the author was led into several reflections upon the conduct of the managers, which the house of commons deemed highly contemptuous and libellous. The language of certain passages was, indeed, rather free and offensive. The charges against Mr. Hastings were said to "originate from *misrepresentation and falsehood*." The house of commons, in making one of those charges, was compared to "a *tribunal of inquisition*, rather than a court of parliament." Others of them were stigmatized as "so *insignificant* in themselves, or founded on such *gross misrepresentations*, that they would not affect an obscure individual, much less a publick character." And, after a great deal of other invective, somewhat more diffuse, and less offensive in single terms, but fully more bitter and sarcastick in substance, the impeachment of Mr. Hastings was said to be "carried on from motives of personal animosity, not from regard to publick justice." This pamphlet made a considerable impression on the publick mind; and it was complained of by Mr. Fox, on the part of the managers. It deserves, however, to be remarked, that although it was

published during the proceedings against Mr. Hastings, and had a direct and undeniable tendency to influence the judgment of the peers as well as the country, no attempt was made to commit the printer or the author, by the mere authority of the house of commons; and Mr. Fox himself was content to move an address for a prosecution in a court of common law.

Mr. Stockdale, the publisher, was accordingly tried on an information filed by the attorney general, *ex officio*. The passages, of which we have just given a summary, were set forth and stated as libellous. The fact of publication was admitted; and Mr. Erskine then delivered the finest of all his orations, whether we regard the wonderful skill with which the argument is conducted; the soundness of the principles laid down, and their happy application to the case; or the exquisite fancy with which they are embellished and illustrated; and the powerful and touching language in which they are conveyed. It is justly regarded, by all English lawyers, as a consummate specimen of the art of addressing a jury; as a standard, a sort of precedent for treating cases of libel, by keeping which in his eye, a man may hope to succeed in special pleading his client's case, within its principle, who is destitute of the talent required even to comprehend the other and higher merits of his original. By those merits, it is recommended to lovers of pure diction; of copious and animated description; of lively, picturesque, and fanciful illustration; of all that constitutes, if we may so speak, the poetry of eloquence; all for which we admire it, when prevented from enjoying its musick and its statuary. We shall venture to recommend this exquisite specimen of Mr. Erskine's powers, by extracting a few passages almost at random.

He thus introduces his audience to a striking view of the grand trial in Westminster Hall, not for the

sake of making fine sentences, or of adorning his speech with a beautiful description; for the speeches of this great advocate may be searched through by the most crafty special pleader, from beginning to end, and no one instance of such useless ornament will be found; but for the solid and important purpose of interesting his hearers in the situation of Mr. Hastings, and of his defender, the author of the pamphlet; of leading the mind to view the prisoner as an oppressed man, overwhelmed by the weight of parliamentary resentment, and ready to be crushed, in the face of the country, by the very forms and solemnities of his trial; of insinuating that the pamphlet only ventures to say something in defence of this unhappy person; and that, in such an unequal contest, an English jury may well excuse a little intemperance in the language of such a generous and almost hopeless defence.

"Gentlemen—before I venture to lay the book before you, it must be yet further remembered (for the fact is equally notorious) that, under these inauspicious circumstances, the trial of Mr. Hastings at the bar of the lords, had actually commenced long before its publication.

"There, the most august and striking spectacle was daily exhibited, which the world ever witnessed. A vast stage of justice was erected, awful from its high authority; splendid from its illustrious dignity; venerable from the learning and wisdom of its judges; captivating and affecting from the mighty concourse of all ranks and conditions which daily flocked into it, as into a theatre of pleasure. There, when the whole publick mind was at once awed and softened to the impression of every human affection, there appeared, day after day, one after another, men of the most powerful and exalted talents, eclipsing by their accusing eloquence the most boasted harangues of antiquity; rousing the pride of national resentment, by the boldest invectives against broken faith and violated treaties; and shaking the bosom with alternate pity and horror, by the most glowing pictures of insulted nature and humanity;—ever animated and energetic, from the love of fame, which is the inherent passion of genius;—firm and indefa-

tigable, from a strong prepossession of the justice of their cause.

"Gentlemen—when the author sat down to write the book now before you, all this terrible, unceasing, exhaustless artillery of warm zeal, matchless vigour of understanding, consuming and devouring eloquence, united with the highest dignity, was daily, and without prospect of conclusion, pouring forth upon one private, unprotected man, who was bound to hear it, in the face of the whole people of England, with reverential submission and silence. I do not complain of this, as I did of the publication of the charges, because it is what the law allowed and sanctioned in the course of a publick trial. But when it is remembered that we are not angels, but weak, fallible men, and that even the noble judges of that high tribunal are clothed beneath their ermines with the common infirmities of man's nature, it will bring us all to a proper temper for considering the book itself, which will, in a few moments, be laid before you. But first, let me once more remind you, that it was under all these circumstances, and amidst the blaze of passion and prejudice, which the scene I have been endeavouring faintly to describe to you, might be supposed likely to produce, that the author whose name I will now give to you, sat down to compose the book which is prosecuted to day as a libel." II. 229—231.

He now brings the author more immediately before the audience, thus skilfully prepared to give him a favourable reception; and he proceeds to put to them at once the chief question they have to decide, but in a striking shape.

"He felt for the situation of a fellow citizen, exposed to a trial, which, whether right or wrong, is undoubtedly a severe one; a trial, certainly not confined to a few criminal acts like those we are accustomed to, but comprehending the transactions of a whole life, and the complicated policies of numerous and distant nations; a trial, which had neither visible limits to its duration, bounds to its expense, nor circumscribed compass for the grasp of memory or understanding; a trial, which had therefore broke loose from the common form of decision, and had become the universal topick of discussion in the world, superseding not only every other grave pursuit, but every fashionable dissipation.

"Gentlemen, the question you have therefore to try upon all this matter is ex-

tremely simple. It is neither more nor less than this. At a time when the charges against Mr. Hastings were, by the implied consent of the commons, in every hand, and on every table; when, by their managers, the lightning of eloquence was incessantly consuming him, and flashing in the eyes of the publick; when every man was with perfect impunity saying, and writing, and publishing just what he pleased of the supposed plunderer and devastator of nations, would it have been criminal in Mr. Hastings himself to have reminded the publick that he was a native of this free land, entitled to the common protection of her justice, and that he had a defence in his turn to offer to them, the outlines of which he implored them in the mean time to receive, as an antidote to the unlimited and unpunished poison in circulation against him? This is, without colour or exaggeration, the true question you are to decide. Because I assert, without the hazard of contradiction, that if Mr. Hastings himself could have stood justified or excused in your eyes for publishing this volume in his own defence, the author, if he wrote it bona fide to defend him, must stand equally excused and justified; and if the author be justified, the publisher cannot be criminal, unless you had evidence that it was published by him with a different spirit and intention from those in which it was written. The question, therefore, is correctly what I just now stated it to be. Could Mr. Hastings have been condemned to infamy for writing this book?

"Gentlemen, I tremble with indignation, to be driven to put such a question in England. Shall it be endured, that a subject of this country (instead of being arraigned and tried for some single act in her ordinary courts, where the accusation, as soon at least as it is made publick, is followed within a few hours by the decision) may be impeached by the commons for the transactions of twenty years, that the accusation shall spread as wide as the region of letters; that the accused, shall stand, day after day, and year after year, as a spectacle before the publick, which shall be kept in a perpetual state of inflammation against him; yet that he shall not, without the severest penalties, be permitted to submit any thing to the judgment of mankind in his defence? If this be law (which it is for you to day to decide) such a man has no trial. That great hall, built by our fathers for English justice, is no longer a court, but an altar; and an Englishman, instead of being judg-

ed in it by God and his country, is a victim and a sacrifice." II. 232—234.

We pass over the whole critical argument which follows on the true meaning of the work in question, and come to perhaps the most interesting passage of the speech. Although Mr. Erskine very judiciously disavows all intention of defending the opinions contained in the pamphlet, or of censuring the managers, and vindicating Mr. Hastings, he is nevertheless led to show, that Mr. Hastings's defender only made a sincere and bona fide appeal to the publick in his behalf; and that he only used, in doing so, the topics which would naturally strike every one who impartially considered the subject. Without defending Mr. Hastings, therefore, he shows how he may be defended, in order to vindicate his client from the charge of making his book a cloak for abusing the house of commons; and it is evident, that the higher he can state the grounds of Mr. Hastings's defence, though without actually entering upon it, the better it must be for Mr. Stockdale. Yet this is not to be rashly done neither. On no account could the orator palliate the enormities of the Indian administration; the publick mind was too full of them; the ears of his audience still rang with the prodigious eloquence which had been called in to blazon them. Any thing absolutely favourable to such conduct; any appearance of callousness or carelessness to such scenes, and consequently any admission which mixed up the pamphleteer too intimately with the author of the wrongs complained of, was studiously to be shunned. How does this most dexterous advocate proceed? He studiously separates his defence of Stockdale as much as possible from a defence of Hastings; yet he begins to feel his way, by remarking, that the supporter of the governour-general might

fairly wonder at the want of Indian accusers.

“Will the attorney-general proceed then to detect the hypocrisy of our author, by giving us some detail of the proofs by which these personal enormities have been established, and which the writer must be supposed to have been acquainted with? I ask this as the defender of Mr. Stockdale, not of Mr. Hastings, with whom I have no concern. I am sorry, indeed, to be so often obliged to repeat this protest; but I really feel myself embarrassed with those repeated coincidences of defence which thicken on me as I advance, and which were, no doubt, overlooked by the commons when they directed this interlocutory inquiry into his conduct. I ask then, *as counsel for Mr. Stockdale*, whether, when a great state criminal is brought for justice at an immense expense to the publick; accused of the most oppressive cruelties, and charged with the robbery of princes, and the destruction of nations; is it not open to any one to ask, who are his accusers? What are the sources and the authorities of these shocking complaints? Where are the ambassadours or memorials of those princes, whose revenues he has plundered? Where are the witnesses for those unhappy men in whose persons the rights of humanity have been violated? How deeply buried is the blood of the innocent, that it does not rise up in retributive judgment to confound the guilty! These surely are questions, which, when a fellow citizen is upon a long, painful, and expensive trial, humanity has a right to propose; which the plain sense of the most unlettered man may be expected to dictate, and which all history must provoke from the more enlightened. When Cicero impeached Verres, before the great tribunal of Rome, of similar cruelties and depredations in her provinces, the Roman people were not left to such inquiries. All Sicily surrounded the forum, demanding justice upon her plunderer and spoiler, with tears and imprecations. It was not by the eloquence of the orator, but by the cries and tears of the miserable, that Cicero prevailed in that illustrious cause. Verres fled from the oaths of his accusers and their witnesses, and not from the voice of Tully. To preserve the fame of his eloquence, he composed his five celebrated speeches; but they were never delivered against the criminal; because he had fled from the city, appalled with the sight of the persecuted and the oppressed. It may be said, that the cases of Sicily and India are widely different;

perhaps they may be; whether they are or not is foreign to my purpose. I am not bound to deny the possibility of answers to such questions; I am only vindicating *the right to ask them.*” II. 242—244.

He here leaves this attempt in favour of the defenders of Hastings, and goes again into some details as to the work and its subject. But seeing, in all probability, how far he might go, he again adverts to the same topick with more perseverance and boldness; and fairly shows how much of the atrocities of Mr. Hastings are to be imputed to his instructions, to his situation, to the wicked policy of England, and of Europe, in distant countries—to the general infamy of civilized man when he disturbs the repose of his less enlightened fellow creatures; till by description and anecdote, and even by a personal adventure of his own in North America, and a speech which, with a fair license, he puts into the mouth of an Indian (a flight to which he evidently did not soar until he perceived that it was safe, from the previous preparation of his hearers) he at last envelops this delicate part of his subject, Hastings, India, the book and all, in a blaze of imagery and declamation, which overpowers the understandings of his audience. We give this wonderful passage entire, premising that the traditional accounts of its effects are to be credited, not even by those who now read it, if they have not also experienced the witchery of this extraordinary man's voice, eye, and action.

“Gentlemen of the jury—If this be a wilfully false account of the instructions given to Mr. Hastings for his government, and of his conduct under them, the author and publisher of this defence deserve the severest punishment, for a mercenary imposition on the publick. But if it be true that he was directed to make the *safety and prosperity of Bengal the first object of his attention*, and that under his administration, it has been safe and prosperous; if it be true that the security and preservation of our possessions and revenues in Asia were marked out to him as the great

leading principle of his government, and that those possessions and revenues, amidst unexampled dangers, have been secured and preserved; then a question may be unaccountably mixed with your consideration, much beyond the consequence of the present prosecution, involving, perhaps, the merit of the impeachment itself, which gave it birth; a question which the commons, as prosecutors or Mr. Hastings, should, in common prudence, have avoided; unless, regretting the unwieldy length of their proceedings against him, they wished to afford him the opportunity of this strange, anomalous defence. For, although I am neither his counsel, nor desire to have any thing to do with his guilt or innocence, yet, in the collateral defence of my client, I am driven to state matter which may be considered by many as hostile to the impeachment. For if our dependencies have been secured, and their interests promoted, I am driven, in the defence of my client, to remark, that it is mad and preposterous to bring to the standard of justice and humanity, the exercise of a dominion, founded upon violence and terror. It may, and must be true, that Mr. Hastings has repeatedly offended against the rights and privileges of Asiatick government, if he was the faithful deputy of a power which could not maintain itself for an hour, without trampling upon both. He may and must have offended against the laws of God and nature, if he was the faithful viceroy of an empire wrested in blood, from the people to whom God and nature had given it. He may and must have preserved that unjust dominion over timorous and abject nations, by a terrifying, overbearing, insulting superiority, if he was the faithful administrator of your government, which, having no root in consent or affection; no foundation in similarity of interests; nor support from any one principle which cements men together in society, could only be upheld by alternate stratagem and force. The unhappy people of India, feeble and effeminate as they are from the softness of their climate, and subdued and broken as they have been, by the knavery and strength of civilisation, still occasionally start up in all the vigour and intelligence of insulted nature. To be governed at all, they must be governed with a rod of iron; and our empire in the east would, long since, have been lost to Great Britain, if civil skill and military prowess had not united their efforts to support an authority, which heaven never gave, by means which it never can sanction.

"Gentlemen—I think I can observe that

you are touched with this way of considering the subject; and I can account for it. I have not been considering it through the cold medium of books, but have been speaking of man and his nature, and of human dominion, from what I have seen of them myself amongst reluctant nations submitting to our authority. I know what they feel, and how such feelings can alone be repressed. I have heard them in my youth from a naked savage, in the indignant character of a prince, surrounded by his subjects, addressing the governor of a British colony, holding a bundle of sticks in his hand, as the notes of his unlettered eloquence: 'Who is it,' said the jealous ruler over the desert, encroached upon by the restless foot of English adventure, 'who is it that causes this river to rise in the high mountains, and to empty itself into the ocean? Who is it that causes to blow the loud winds of winter, and that calms them again in the summer? Who is it that rears up the shade of those lofty forests, and blasts them with the quick lightning at his pleasure? The same Being, who gave to you a country on the other side of the waters, and gave ours to us; and by this title we will defend it!' said the warrior, throwing down his tomahawk upon the ground, and raising the war-sound of his nation—These are the feelings of subjugated man all round the globe; and, depend upon it, nothing but fear will control where it is vain to look for affection.

"These reflections are the only antidotes to those anathemas of superhuman eloquence, which have lately shaken these walls that surround us; but which it unaccountably falls to my province, whether I will or no, a little to stem the torrent of, by reminding you, that you have a mighty sway in Asia, which cannot be maintained by the finer sympathies of life, or the practice of its charities and affections. What will they do for you, when surrounded by two hundred thousand men with artillery, cavalry, and elephants, calling upon you for their dominions which you have robbed them of? Justice may, no doubt, in such a case forbid the levying of a fine to pay a revolting soldiery; a treaty may stand in the way of increasing a tribute to keep up the very existence of the government; and delicacy for women may forbid all entrance into a Zenana for money, whatever may be the necessity for taking it. All these things must ever be occurring. But, under the pressure of such constant difficulties, so dangerous to national honour, it might be better, perhaps, to think of effectually securing it al-

together, by recalling our troops and our merchants, and abandoning our oriental empire. Until this be done, neither religion nor philosophy can be pressed very far into the aid of reformation and punishment. If England, from a lust of ambition and dominion, will insist on maintaining despotick rule over distant and hostile nations, beyond all comparison more numerous and extended than herself, and give commission to her viceroys to govern them with no other instructions than to preserve them, and to secure permanently their revenues; with what colour of consistency or reason can she place herself in the moral chair, and affect to be shocked at the execution of her own orders; adverting to the exact measure of wickedness and injustice necessary to their execution, and complaining only of *the excess* as the immorality, considering her authority as a dispensation for breaking the commands of God, and the breach of them as only punishable when contrary to the ordinances of man?

"Such a proceeding, gentlemen, begets serious reflections. It would be better, perhaps, for the masters and the servants of all such governments, to join in supplication, that the great Author of violated humanity may not confound them together in one common judgment." II 260—265.

In considering this passage, we earnestly entreat the reader, whoever he may be, to reflect on the moral of it, as it bears on the great questions of East Indian policy; but, as far as relates to the character of Mr. Erskine's eloquence, we would point out, as the most remarkable feature in it, that in no one sentence is the subject, the business in hand, the case, the client, the verdict, lost sight of; and that the fire of that oratory, or rather that rhetorick (for it was quite under discipline) which was melting the hearts, and dazzling the understandings of his hearers, had not the power to touch for an instant the hard head of the *nisi prius* lawyer, from which it radiated; or to make him swerve, by one hairbreadth even, from the minuter details most befitting his purpose, and the alternate admissions and disavowals best adapted to put his *case* in the *safest position*. This, indeed, was the grand secret of Mr. Er-

VOL. IV.

skine's unparalleled success at the English bar. Without it, he might have filled Westminster Hall with his sentences, and obtained a reputation for eloquence, somewhat like the fame of a popular preacher or a distinguished actor; but his fortunes, aye, and the liberties of his country, are built on the matchless skill with which he could subdue the genius of a first rate orator to the uses of the most consummate advocate of the age.

After the passage just quoted, he contends (always taking care to protest against the inuendoes in every particular) that though a man in the situation of the author should happen, in a long work, to use one or two intemperate expressions, he must not, on this account, be "subjected to infamy." "If," says he, "this severe duty were binding on your consciences, the liberty of the press would be but an empty sound; and no man could venture to write on any subject, however pure his purpose, without an attorney at one elbow, and a counsel at the other." This leads to another of those highly-wrought, and yet argumentative passages, which so eminently distinguish this oration.

"From minds thus subdued by the terrors of punishment, there could issue no works of genius to expand the empire of human reason, nor any masterly compositions on the general nature of government, by the help of which, the great commonwealths of mankind have founded their establishments; much less any of those useful applications of them to critical conjunctures, by which, from time to time, our own constitution, by the exertion of patriot citizens, has been brought back to its standard. Under such terrors, all the great lights of science and civilisation must be extinguished, for men cannot communicate their free thoughts to one another with a lash held over their heads. It is the nature of every thing that is great and useful, both in the animate and inanimate world, to be wild and irregular; and we must be contented to take them with the alloys which belong to them, or live without them. Genius breaks from the

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fetters of criticism, but its wanderings are sanctioned by its majesty and wisdom, when it advances in its path—subject it to the critick, and you tame it into dulness. Mighty rivers break down their banks in the winter, sweeping away to death the flocks which are fattened on the soil that they fertilize in the summer: the few may be saved by embankments from drowning, but the flock must perish for hunger.—Tempests occasionally shake our dwellings, and dissipate our commerce; but they scourge before them the lazy elements, which without them would stagnate into pestilence. In like manner, Liberty herself, the last and best gift of God to his creatures, must be taken just as she is—you might pare her down into bashful regularity, and shape her into a perfect model of severe scrupulous law; but she would then be Liberty no longer; and you must be content to die under the lash of this inexorable justice which you had exchanged for the banners of Freedom." II. 266—268.

The only other extract which we shall make, is from the Peroration, where he illustrates his argument, of the necessity of taking the whole work in question together, in judging of its intentions and merits, by the awful example of the judgment to be expected on the book of human life at the last day; a topick which he manages with his usual delicacy of taste, and felicity of diction.

"One word more, gentlemen, and I have done.—Every human tribunal ought to take care to administer justice, as we look hereafter to have justice administered to ourselves. Upon the principle on which the attorney-general prays sentence upon my client—God have mercy upon us!—instead of standing before him in judgment with the hopes and consolations of Christians, we must call upon the mountains to cover us; for which of us can present, for omniscient examination, a pure, unspotted, and faultless course? But I humbly expect that the benevolent Author of our being will judge us as I have been pointing out for your example. Holding up the great volume of our lives in his hands, and regarding the general scope of them, if he discovers benevolence, charity, and good-will to man beating in the heart, where he alone can look; if he finds that our conduct, though often forced out of the path by our infirmities, has been in general well directed; his all-searching

eye will assuredly never pursue us into those little corners of our lives, much less will his justice select them for punishment, without the general context of our existence, by which faults may be sometimes found to have grown out of virtues, and very many of our heaviest offences to have been grafted by human imperfection upon the best and kindest of our affections. No, gentlemen; believe me, this is not the course of divine justice, or there is no truth in the Gospels of Heaven. If the general tenour of a man's conduct be such as I have represented it, he may walk through the shadow of death, with all his faults about him, with as much cheerfulness as in the common paths of life; because he knows, that instead of a stern accuser to expose before the Author of his nature those frail passages, which, like the scored matter in the book before you, chequers the volume of the brightest and best spent life, his mercy will obscure them from the eye of his purity, and our repentance blot them out for ever." II. 269—271.

The speech for Mr. Perry (the editor of the Morning Chronicle, who has distinguished himself too, on a late occasion, as the successful advocate of a free press) is, though much less brilliant, almost equal in skill and argument; and it produced, like the defence of Stockdale, a clear acquittal. We shall, however, rather direct the attention of our readers to the speech in Frost's case, who was accused, by the very *comfortable* loyalty of some good men in those days, of uttering seditious words.—They turned out to be a few random expressions used in passing through a coffeehouse, where he had been dining, and drinking pretty freely, at an *agricultural* meeting.

At the present day, or at any time since the mild and conciliatory administration of Mr. Addington (to whom, on this, as well as on other accounts, we gladly pay the tribute of our humble gratitude) no man would be found base enough to denounce such offences, because the government would be ashamed to employ even professional spies on such eavesdropping errands. But in that day of alarm, it was far other-

wise. We were then reaping the bitter first-fruits of the penitence of Mr. Pitt—a new convert from the damnable heresy of reform, and performing his rigorous noviciate among the associated enemies of popular rights. In the fervour of that new sprung zeal, an experiment was made on the temper and character of the nation, which nothing but the alarms transplanted from France could have made any mortal bold enough to have attempted;—which the conversions of Oliver Cromwell did not surpass, except in success; which Buonaparte himself, in the antijacobin part of his life—in his third manner (to use the language of painters) has scarcely excelled, unless in the greater boldness of the design, and brilliancy of the execution; and which the integrity of British courts of justice, and the genius of Mr. Erskine, alone prevented from dying the canvas with as deep a shade among ourselves. The trade of a spy was then not merely lucrative; it had almost ceased to be degrading. Friends of the constitution, as they were called, conveyed the dark hint, and carried the careless words of the supposed “democrat” from house to house, till, at last, his person was watched, his temper tried, the accents of discontent registered, as they were wrung from his lips by every indignity which the *persecution of society* (if we may so speak) can inflict; and then his company shunned by the base and the cowardly; or only resorted to by the *loyal* who had not yet fattened upon him, and had their fortune still to make out of his life and conversation.

We speak not from hearsay, or from fancy, but from distinct and personal recollection; for fifteen years have not passed over our heads, since every part of the island, from the metropolis to the meanest village that supports an attorney or a curate, teemed with the wretched vermin whom we are in vain at-

tempting to describe. We speak, indeed, from notes that are still fresh and legible; for, turn which way we will, we now see almost all the places of profit and trust in this island filled with persons, for whose elevation we should find it hard to account, if we did not look back to their apprenticeships in 1794 and 1795. We speak from a feeling recollection; for, where did this unutterable baseness; this infinite misery; this most humiliating curse, fall so heavily as in the very city where we now write? And for no other reason, but because Scotland has no popular spirit, from having no popular elections—and because her courts of justice were, at that time, considerably behind the courts of Westminster. In London, the evil was less severely felt; but it was no fault of Mr. Pitt’s that it stopt where it did. He had committed in his youth the sin of reform; he had his atonement to make for an offence only pardonable on the score of that heedless and tender age—only to be expiated by the most glaring proofs of amendment.

Mr. Frost had been a reformer, too; and had even held a high office among the members of Mr. Pitt’s society. In this capacity he had constant communications with that distinguished personage; and, at his trial, could even produce the most cordial and respectful letters, on the interests of their “great and common cause.” The canting visage of Harrison, or the steady virtue of Hutchison, were not more hateful to Cromwell; Danton and Brissot were not more formidable to Robespierre; Syeyes is less odious to Buonaparte; a catholick petition to lord Castle-reagh; or, to come nearer to the point, the question of the abolition, to the same Mr. Pitt himself, after his periods had been turned on the slave traffick—than such men as Frost, Hardy, Thelwall and Holcroft were to that converted reformer of the parliament. After he had once

forsworn the errors of his way, and said to corruption, "thou art my brother," and called power, or rather place, his god (for he truckled too much for the sake of merely *keeping in*—he was too mean in his official propensities, to deserve the name of *ambitious*) the sight of a reformer was a spectre to his eyes; he detested it as the wicked do the light; as tyrants do the history of their own times, which haunts their repose even after the conscience has ceased to sting their souls. We must be pardoned for using this language. We know of no epithet too harsh for him who was profligate enough to thirst for the blood of his former associates in reform; of the very men whom his own eloquence, and the protection of his high station, had seduced into popular courses; and, not content with deserting them, to use the power into which he had mounted on their backs, for the purpose of their destruction! When the wars and the taxes which we owe to the lamentable policy of this rash statesman shall be forgotten, and the turmoils of this factious age shall live only in historical record; when those venal crowds shall be no more, who now subsist on the spoil of the myriads whom he has undone, the passage of this great orator's life, which will excite the most lively emotions, will be that where his apostacies are enrolled; where the case of the African slave, and of the Irish catholick, stand black in the sight; but most of all will the heart shudder at his persecutions of the reformers, and his attempt to naturalize into England a system of proscriptions, which nothing but the trial by jury, and by English judges, could have prevented from sinking the whole land in infamy and blood.

The speech for Mr. Frost is the first of those almost miraculous exertions which, in that momentous crisis, Mr. Erskine made for the liberties of his country. We shall give

our readers only a short specimen of it, as descriptive of the proceedings which we have been alluding to; and more especially of the conduct of the government and their agents in Scotland. Could evidence be brought from Ireland, we apprehend the Scottish persecutions would sink out of sight.

"Gentlemen—it is impossible for me to form any other judgment of the impression which such a proceeding, altogether, is likely to make upon your minds, but from that which it makes upon *my own*. In the first place, is society to be protected by the breach of those confidences, and in the destruction of that security and tranquillity, which constitute its very essence every where, but which, till of late, most emphatically characterized the life of an Englishman? Is government to derive dignity and safety by means which render it impossible for any man who has the least spark of honour to step forward to serve it? Is the time come, when obedience to the law and correctness of conduct are not a sufficient protection to the subject, but that he must measure his steps, select his expressions, and adjust his very looks in the most common and private intercourses of life? Must an English gentleman, in future, fill his wine by a measure, lest, in the openness of his soul, and whilst believing his neighbours are joining with him in that happy relaxation and freedom of thought, which is the prime blessing of life, he should find his character blasted, and his person in a prison? Does any man put such constraint upon himself in the most private moment of his life, that he would be contented to have his loosest and lightest words recorded; and set in array against him in a court of justice? Thank God, the world lives very differently, or it would not be worth living in. There are moments when jarring opinions may be given without inconsistency; when Truth herself may be sported with without the breach of veracity; and where well-imagined nonsense is not only superiour to, but is the very index to wit and wisdom. I might safely assert, taking, too, for the standard of my assertion, the most honourably correct and enlightened societies in the kingdom, that if malignant spies were properly posted, scarcely a dinner would end without a duel and an indictment.

"When I came down this morning, and found, contrary to my expectation, that we were to be stuffed into this miserable hole

in the wall,* to consume our constitutions: suppose I had muttered along through the gloomy passages: 'What, is this cursed trial of Hastings going on again? Are we to have no respite? Are we to die of the asthma in this damned corner? I wish to God that the roof would come down and abate the impeachment, lords, commons, and all together.' *Such a wish, proceeding from the mind*, would be desperate wickedness, and the serious expression of it a high and criminal contempt of parliament. Perhaps the bare utterance of such words, even without meaning, would be irreverend and foolish; but still, if such expressions had been gravely imputed to me as the result of a malignant mind, seeking the destruction of the lords and commons of England, how would they have been treated in the house of commons, on a motion for my expulsion? How! The witness would have been laughed out of the house before he had half finished his evidence, and would have been voted to be too great a blockhead to deserve a worse character. Many things are, indeed, wrong and reprehensible, that neither do nor can become the objects of criminal justice; because the happiness and security of social life, which are the very end and object of all law and justice, forbid the communication of them; because the spirit of a gentleman, which is the most refined morality, either shuts men's ears against what should not be heard, or closes their lips with the sacred seal of honour.

"This tacit but well understood and delightful compact of social life, is perfectly consistent with its safety. The security of free governments, and the unsuspecting confidence of every man who lives under them, are not only compatible, but inseparable. It is easy to distinguish where the publick duty calls for the violation of the private one; criminal intention, but not indecent levities, not even grave opinions unconnected with conduct, are to be exposed to the magistrate; and when men, which happens but seldom, without the honour or the sense to make the due distinctions, force complaints upon governments, which they can neither approve of nor refuse to act upon; it becomes the office of juries, as it is yours to day, to draw the true line in their judgments, measuring men's conduct by the safe standards of human life and experience."

II. 341, 344.

After quoting Mr. Burke's spirited remarks on the system of *espionage* and persecution practised in France, he proceeds:

"If these sentiments apply so justly to the reprobation of persecution for opinions, even for opinions which the laws, however absurdly, inhibit; for opinions, though certainly and maturely entertained, though publicly professed, and though followed up by corresponding conduct; how irresistibly do they devote to contempt and execration, all eavesdropping attacks upon loose conversations, casual or convivial, more especially when proceeding from persons conforming to all the religious and civil institutions of the state, unsupported by general and avowed profession, and not merely unconnected with conduct, but scarcely attended with recollection or consciousness! Such a vexatious system of inquisition, the disturber of household peace, began and ended with the star-chamber. The venerable law of England never knew it; her noble, dignified, and humane policy soars above the little irregularities of our lives, and disdains to enter our closets without a warrant, founded upon complaint. Constructed by man to regulate human infirmities, and not by God to guard the purity of angels, it leaves to us our thoughts, our opinions, and our conversations; and punishes only overt acts of contempt and disobedience to her authority.

"Gentlemen, this is not the specious phrase of an advocate for his client; it is not even my exposition of the spirit of our constitution; but it is the phrase and letter of the law itself. In the most critical conjunctures of our history, when government was legislating for its own existence and continuance, it never overstepped this wise moderation. To give stability to establishments, it occasionally bridled opinions concerning them; but its punishments, though sanguinary, *laid no snares for thoughtless life*, and took no man by surprise." II. 345, 346.

We subjoin one other passage from the conclusion of the speech, because its application to the present times is but too striking.

"Indeed, I am very sorry to say that we *hear* of late too much of the excellence of the British government, and *feel* but too little of its benefits. They, too, who pronounce its panegyricks, are those who alone prevent the entire publick from acceding to them; the eulogium comes from a suspected quarter, when it is pronounced by persons enjoying every honour from the crown, and treating the people upon all

* The King's Bench sat in the small court of Common Pleas, the impeachment having shut up its own court.

occasions with suspicion and contempt. The three estates of the kingdom are co-ordinate, all alike representing the dignity, and jointly executing the authority of the nation; yet all our loyalty seems to be wasted upon one of them. How happens it else, that we are so exquisitely sensible, so tremblingly alive to every attack upon the crown, or the nobles that surround it, yet so completely careless of what regards the once respected and awful commons of Great Britain!

"If Mr. Frost had gone into every coffeehouse, from Charingcross to the Exchange, lamenting the dangers of popular government; reprobating the peevishness of opposition in parliament; and wishing, in the most advised terms, that we could look up to the throne and its excellent ministers alone, for quiet and comfortable government, do you think that we should have had an indictment? I ask pardon for the supposition; I can discover that you are laughing at me for its absurdity. Indeed, I might ask you whether it is not the notorious language of the highest men, in and out of parliament, to justify the alienation of the popular part of the government from the spirit and principle of its trust and office, and to prognosticate the very ruin and downfall of England, from a free and uncorrupted representation of the great body of the people? I solemnly declare to you, that I think the whole of this system leads inevitably to the dangers we seek to avert; it divides the higher and the lower classes of the nation into adverse parties, instead of uniting and compounding them into one harmonious whole; it embitters the people against authority, which, when they are made to feel and know is but their own security, they must, from the nature of man, unite to support and cherish. I do not believe that there is any set of men to be named in England, I might say, that I do not know an individual, who seriously wishes to touch the crown, or any branch of our excellent constitution; and when we hear peevish and disrespectful expressions concerning any of its functions, depend upon it, it proceeds from some practical variance between its theory and its practice. These variances are the fatal springs of disorder and disgust; they lost America, and in that unfortunate separation laid the foundation of all that we have to fear; yet, instead of treading back our steps, we seek recovery in the system which brought us into peril. Let government, in England, always take care to make its administration correspond with the true spirit of our genuine constitution,

and nothing will ever endanger it. Let it seek to maintain its corruptions by severity and coercion, and neither laws nor arms will support it. These are my sentiments; and I advise you, however, unpopular they may be at this moment, to consider them, before you repel them." II. 353—356.

In the violence of that day, the exertions of Mr. Erskine failed of their accustomed effect; and Mr. Frost was found guilty. But the impression of his defence was not lost; and it deterred the government from risking its credit on such precarious speculations, until, in 1794, the charges of high treason were brought forward, the whole force of the bar marshalled against the prisoners, and every effort used to beat down their undaunted defender. Then it was that his consummate talents shone in their full lustre. His indefatigable patience, his eternal watchfulness, his unceasing labour of body and of mind, the strength of an herculean constitution, his untameable spirit, a subtlety which the merest pleader might envy, a quickness of intellect which made up for the host he was opposed to: these were the great powers of the man; and the wonderful eloquence of his speeches is only to be spoken of as second to these. Amidst all the struggles of the constitution, in parliament, in the council, and in the field, there is no one man, certainly, to whose individual exertions it owes so much, as to this celebrated advocate; and if ever a single patriot saved his country from the horrors of a proscription, this man did this deed for us, in stemming the tide of state prosecutions.

We have spoken most at large of his later productions; but the reader will naturally be anxious to look at the beginnings of his career. We subjoin, therefore, an extract from his celebrated speech for captain Baillie, being the first he ever made, and pronounced by him immediately after he was called to the bar. The specimen we are about to give, is selected principally with a view to

show, that the courage which marked Mr. Erskine's professional life, was not acquired after the success which rendered it a safe and a cheap virtue; but, being naturally inherent in the man, was displayed at a moment when attended with the most formidable risks.

"In this enumeration of delinquents, the revd. Mr. ———, looks round, as if he thought I had forgotten him. He is mistaken; I well remembered him: but *his* infamy is worn threadbare. Mr. Murphy has already treated him with that ridicule which his folly, and Mr. Peckham with that invective which his wickedness, deserve. I shall, therefore, forbear to taint the ear of the court further with his name: a name which would bring dishonour upon his country and its religion, if human nature were not happily compelled to bear the greater part of the disgrace, and to share it amongst mankind."

"*Such, my lords, is the case.* The defendant, not a disappointed, malicious informer, prying into official abuses, because without office himself, but himself a man in office; not troublesomely inquisitive into other men's departments, but conscientiously correcting his own; doing it pursuant to the rules of law, and, what heightens the character, doing it at the risk of his office, from which the effrontery of power has already suspended him without proof of his guilt; a conduct, not only unjust and illiberal, but highly disrespectful to this court, whose judges sit in the double capacity of ministers of the law, and governours of this sacred and abused institution. Indeed, lord ——— has, in my mind, acted such a part.

* * *

[*Here, lord Mansfield observing the counsel heated with his subject, and growing personal on the first lord of the admiralty, told him that lord ——— was not before the court.*]

"I know, that he is not formally before the court; but, for that very reason, *I will bring him before the court.* He has placed these men in the front of the battle, in hopes to escape under their shelter; but I will not join in battle with them: *their* vices, though screwed up to the highest pitch of human depravity, are not of dignity enough to vindicate the combat with me. I will drag *him* to light, who is the dark mover behind this scene of iniquity. I assert, that the earl of ——— has but

one road to escape out of this business without pollution and disgrace; and *that is*, by publicly disavowing the acts of the prosecutors, and restoring captain Baillie to his command. If he does this, then, his offence will be no more than the too common one, of having suffered his own *personal* interest to prevail over his *publick* duty, in placing his voters in the hospital. But if, on the contrary, he continues to protect the prosecutors, in spite of the evidence of their guilt, which has excited the abhorrence of the numerous audience that crowd this court—if *he keeps this injured man suspended, or dares to turn that suspension into a removal, I shall then not scruple to declare him an accomplice in their guilt; a shameless oppressor; a disgrace to his rank, and a traitor to his trust.* But as I should be very sorry that the fortune of my brave and honourable friend should depend, either upon the exercise of lord ———'s virtues, or the influence of his fears, I do most earnestly entreat the court to mark the malignant object of this prosecution, and to defeat it. I beseech you, my lords, to consider, that even by discharging the rule, and with costs, the defendant is neither protected nor restored. I trust, therefore, your lordships will not rest satisfied with fulfilling your JUDICIAL duty, but, as the strongest evidence of foul abuses has, by accident, come collaterally before you, that you will protect a brave and publick spirited officer from the persecution this writing has brought upon him, and not suffer so dreadful an example to go abroad into the world, as the ruin of an upright man, for having faithfully discharged his duty.

"My lords, this matter is of the last importance. I speak not as an ADVOCATE alone, I speak to you as A MAN, as a member of a state, whose very existence depends upon her naval strength. If a misgovernment were to fall upon Chelsea hospital to the ruin and discouragement of our army, it would be no doubt to be lamented; yet I should not think it fatal. But if our fleets are to be crippled by the baneful influence of elections, we are lost indeed! If the seaman, who, while he exposes his body to fatigues and dangers, looking forward to Greenwich as an asylum for infirmity and old age, sees the gates of it blocked up by corruption, and hears the riot and mirth of luxurious landmen drowning the groans and complaints of the wounded, helpless companions of his glory—he will tempt the seas no more. The admiralty may press HIS BODY, indeed, at the expense of humanity and the constitution, but they cannot press *his*

mind; they cannot press the heroick ardour of a British sailor; and, instead of a fleet to carry terroure all round the globe, the admiralty may not much longer be able to amuse us, with even the peaceable, unsubstantial pageant of a review.

"FINE AND IMPRISONMENT! The man deserves a PALACE, instead of a PRISON, who prevents the palace, built by the publick bounty of his country, from being converted into a dungeon, and who sacrifices his own security to the interests of humanity and virtue." I. 20 29—32.

The professional life of this eminent person, who has, of late years, reached the highest honours of the law, is, in every respect, useful, as an example to future lawyers. It shows, that a base, time-serving demeanour towards the judges, and a corrupt or servile conduct towards the government, are not the only, though, from the frailty of human nature, and the wickedness of the age, they may often prove the surest roads to preferment. It exalts the character of an English barrister beyond what, in former times, it had attained, and holds out an illustrious instance of patriotism and independence, united with the highest legal excellence, and crowned, in the worst of times, with the most ample success. But it is doubly important, by proving how much a single man can do against the corruption of his age, and how far he can vindicate the liberties of his country, so long as courts of justice are pure, by raising

his single voice against the outcry of the people, and the influence of the crown, at a time when the union of these opposite forces was bearing down all opposition in parliament, and daily setting at nought the most splendid talents, armed with the most just cause. While the administration of the law flows in such pure channels; while the judges are incorruptible, and are watched by the scrutinizing eyes of an enlightened bar, as well as by the jealous attention of the country; while juries continue to know, and to exercise their high functions, and a single advocate of honesty and talents remains—thank God, happen what will in other places, our personal safety is beyond the reach of a corrupt ministry and their venal adherents. Justice will hold her even balance, in the midst of hosts armed with gold or with steel. The law will be administered steadily, while the principles of right and wrong; the evidence of the senses themselves; the very axioms of arithmetick, may seem, elsewhere, to be mixed in one giddy and inextricable confusion; and, after every other plank of the British constitution shall have sunk below the weight of the crown, or been stove in by the violence of popular commotion, that one will remain, to which we are ever fondest of clinging, and by which we can always most surely be saved.

FROM THE MONTHLY REVIEW.

The Lady of the Lake; a Poem. By Walter Scott, Esq. 4to. 2l. 2s. boards. Philadelphia, republished by Edward Earle, in a miniature edition. Price \$1. 1810.

"Nec virtute foret clarisve potentius armis

Quam linguâ Latium, si non offenderet unum-

Quemque poetarum limæ labor, et mora. Vos O

Pompilius sanguis, carmen reprehendite, quod non

Multa dies et multa litura coërcuit, atque

Perfectum decies non castigavit ad unguem."

De Arte Poeticâ. v. 289.

UNDER the shelter of this great authority, we commence our review of the highly poetical but most incorrect work before us.

The poet tells us in his parting address, that

—"Little reck's he of the censure sharp
May idly cavil at an idle lay:"—

but we trust that our readers will not find us disposed to cavil; and we are certain that censure, in this instance, will not be idle, because, if a pure literary taste be yet worth preserving among us, on no occasion can its advocates stand forwards with better grace, and with more likelihood of obtaining the approbation of the judicious and intelligent, than on the present. With due respect, then, we approach an author whose eminent genius we warmly and freely acknowlegde, but whose carelessness in composition is, we conceive, making a rapid progress in barbarizing our language and corrupting our taste. We shall begin by a general survey of the plan of the poem, interspersed with such remarks as arise from the subject; then make some extracts as specimens of the style and execution; and conclude with further observations on its merits in all these respects.

The events recorded in the story are supposed to have taken place in the reign of James the fifth of Scotland. The scene is laid chiefly in the vicinity of Loch-Katrine, in the western Highlands of Perthshire. The time of action includes six days: and the transactions of each day occupy a canto. After a fine address to the harp of the north, the first canto, which is called *The Chase*, commences with an account of a long and dangerous hunt, over a tract of country, of which, we have no doubt, the topographical accuracy is equal to the picturesque description. The huntsmen drop the pursuit in succession,

"And when the brigg of Turk was won,
The headmost horseman rode alone."

His two bloodhounds drive the
"stalwart stag" up to the western

VOL. IV.

2 R

boundary of Loch-Katrine; where, as they approach to seize him, instead of turning to bay, he dashes into a deep ravine, and foils their pursuit in the crags and thickets below. Here the gallant steed of the sportsman falls exhausted, and expires. He pathetically apostrophizes the noble animal, and calling off his dogs, endeavours to retrace his way to his companions; when his road on the wild borders of the lake, among mountains and woods, is as clearly brought to our view as if we really beheld it. Having wandered for some time in this romantick scene, his path winds out on the Lake, and gives him a glorious prospect of its expanse. Here he blows his horn, in hopes of summoning some straggler of his train; but, to his astonishment, he perceives a damsel of matchless beauty and elegance, whose dress betrays the daughter of some highland chief, guiding a light skiff over the water. As she draws near the shore, she looks round for the person who blew the horn; asks whether it was her "father," and, more gently, whether it was "Malcolm?" On seeing a stranger, she pushes her boat from the shore, but, reassured by his address and appearance, she listens to his tale of losing himself in the chase, and courteously offers him the rights of hospitality in her father's house. To his surprise, she adds that old Allan-Bane, their secondsighted minstrel, had foretold his mischance, and his arrival at the lake. He takes the oar from the lady, and they land on a thickly wooded island. The "rustick bower," or, as the lady gayly calls it, the enchanted "hall," which they reach through a tangled path, excites still farther the wonder of the stranger. The large room which they enter is hung round with trophies of the chase; and a sword of enormous size, falling as they cross the threshold with a loud clang on the floor, not a little startles the knight; but he blushes for his mo-

mentary alarm, and, taking up the steel, asks whose "stalwart arm" could wield so vast a weapon? She tells him that it trembles in her father's hand as lightly as a hazel wand in her's, and adds, playfully, that her sire was equal in size to Ferragus or Ascabart:

"But in the absent giants' hold,
Are women now, and menials old.

The mistress of the mansion appears, the Lady Margaret,

"To whom, though more than kindred
knew,
Young Ellen gave a mother's due:"

by which obscure piece of information, we are afforded but small insight into the relationship of the characters at present. However, the stranger informs us that he is

"The knight of Snowdoun, James Fitz
James;"

and in return for this communication he seems disposed to ascertain the degree and title of his hosts; but the elder lady "heard with silence grave," or Ellen innocently smiled away his inquiries:

"Wierd women we! by dale and down,
We dwell afar from tower and town,"
&c. &c.

She sings a very pretty song in continuance, and is accompanied by an unseen harp. The stranger, delighted with his reception, retires to his bed of mountain-heather, and dreams of all the strange accidents of the day; and his vision is described with all the commanding imagination of a poet. Chiefly, however, the knight dwells on the likeness in the highland maiden to the exiled family of Douglas; and on the giantick sword, which could not be wielded by any but a Douglas arm. To chase these painful thoughts, he breathes his midnight orison, and tells his beads of gold, and sinks to rest,

"Until the heath cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawned on Benvenue."

Thus interested in the characters and events of the story, the reader is introduced to the second canto, entitled *The Island*. It opens with a morning scene, and a most beautiful song of the aged minstrel, sitting on a rock which overhangs the Lake, and viewing the departure of the stranger in a vessel which bears him to the opposite shore. Ellen sits beside the minstrel, and smiles to see the parting stranger linger, and stop, and turn to wave a long and repeated adieu. She blushes, however, for her momentary forgetfulness, and bids the old man sing the praise of a noble house, and "pour forth the glory of the Græme!" She reddens deeper at the name;

"For of his clan, in hall and bower,
Young Malcolm Græme was held the
flower."

The minstrel falls into a melancholy reverie; in the course of which he gives us such glimpses of the events preceding the story, as serve greatly to heighten our interest in the fate of the characters. He says that his harp now returns such mournful sounds to his touch, as it did in "Bothwell's banner'd hall,"

"Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
Were banished from their native heaven."

Ellen, who now appears confessedly a Douglas,

"The Lady of the bleeding heart,"

endeavours to cheer the old minstrel; but, on her mentioning the name of black sir Roderick, the scourge of the Saxons and the pride of Clan-Alpine, a kinsman of the Douglasses and their protector at present, the bard reminds her that this savage chieftain (who is admirably painted) aspires to her hand; and Ellen, shuddering at the thought, declares her resolution to die in a convent, or wander

"Through realms beyond the sea,
Seeking the world's cold charity,"

rather than become the bride of sir Roderick. To change the subject, she speaks of their stranger guest; but Allan-Bane foretells sorrow, even from him, since the Douglas sword

"Did, self unscabbarded, foreshow
The footstep of a secret foe."

At all events, Roderick was likely to be suspicious and jealous of him, and the minstrel reminds Ellen of Roderick's quarrel with Malcolm Græme. As they converse, sir Roderick's "banner'd pine" advances up the lake in four vessels, to the sound of martial musick. This scene is highly finished, and the expressive notes of the pibroch almost seem to have that effect in the poet's description which is ascribed to them in reality. The words of the war-song are spirited; but the arrival of the boats at the shore presents us with a most engaging picture. Lady Margaret, the mother of Roderick, receives him with her female band, and calls Ellen to welcome him still more gratefully; but the reluctant damsel at this moment hears her father's bugle; and, hastening with Allan-Bane into her skiff, she darts forward over the lake to meet the Douglas. Their embrace is most sweetly and naturally described; and the groupe of the father, the daughter, and the lover modestly standing at a little distance, with the aged minstrel in the boat, will surely call forth the talents of some painter worthy to embody the images of the poet.

The Douglas answers all the expectations which have been formed of him; and Malcolm Græme is one of the most winning young heroes of romance. Roderick is an admirable contrast. The reader has been prepared for all these characters very artfully; and his gratification when they are introduced to him is heightened instead of diminished.

Roderick ill brooks the appearance of a rival, notwithstanding his friendly guidance of the Douglas safe through the royal spies and scouts (though Malcolm was a royal ward) and spoils the happiness of their meeting by announcing the approach of the king on a hunting party, or the pretext of a hunting party, to Loch-Katrine. Douglas determines that no friend shall suffer for him and his daughter, and resolves to seek shelter among the mountains; but Roderick will not allow this; and, asking the hand of Ellen, he declares, that, united with the Douglas, he shall be "confident in arms" against the king. Ellen's agitation and despair for her father's safety, almost drive her to accept the hand of the dreaded Roderick: but Malcolm rises to speak. Douglas, anticipating him, tells Roderick that Ellen cannot be his bride. Roderick then manifests the most indignant rage; and, as Malcolm hastens to support Ellen, who is overcome with this scene, the fierce chieftain attacks his rival, and they are separated only by the strength of Douglas. With a few manly words of affection for him and his lovely daughter, and a stern defiance to Roderick, Malcolm departs, and, attended by Allan-Bane to the water's side, cries out with noble spirit,

"Tell Roderick Dhu, I owed him nought,
Not the poor service of a boat,
To waft me to yon mountain side.—
Then plunged he in the flashing tide."

The minstrel watches Malcolm safe over to the opposite shore, and thus ends the second canto. Thus, too, ends, for the present, our labour of detail; or, rather, our pleasure in giving the outline of the events and characters of the story. These have been hitherto excellently related and contrasted; but "Oh! most lame and impotent" progression! All that follows of beauty in the third, is the beauty of long description unconnected with the plot; and the ad-

vance of the main story is so miserably delayed, that we lose almost all our interest in the fate of the characters. Can it be believed that Malcolm Græme, the gallant, the ingenuous lover of Ellen, appears not again till the end of the sixth canto?

"Ostendent terris hunc tantum fata, neque
ultra

"Esse sinent?"—

Yet so it is. The only one of our old acquaintance, whom we see in the third canto, which is called *The Gathering*, is Roderick Dhu. We hear, indeed, with that chieftain, a song from Ellen, which we had much rather not have heard, since it is nearly the worst of the many doleful canticles in the volume. How this author, who can be a genuine poet when he pleases, not only in the description of inanimate nature, but in scenes full of life, of spirit, or of tenderness, can write his songs (for the exceptions are not numerous) in such lamentable taste, we are as unable to conceive as we are sorry to be compelled to remark: but we shall not any farther anticipate the censure which the mere quotation of one of these ditties, and a reference to some others, must entail on them.

In *The Gathering*, much good description and many picturesque passages undoubtedly occur. The sacrifice, or augury of the Taghairm, a superstitious mode of inquiring into futurity, is performed by Brian the hermit, at the orders of Roderick. This hermit is a wonderful being, and is fearfully described; but he detains us so long with his preparations, both in this canto and as they are related more fully in the 4th, that we cannot help exclaiming: "Leave muttering thy damned curses," and let us go on with the story. He slays "a goat, the patriarch of the flock," *vir gregis, ipse caper*, and makes a slender cross of yew, the ends of which he burns in the

flames, quenches in the blood of the patriarch, and sends it forwards, under the name of the fiery cross, from village to village, by relays of messengers, to rouse the country to arms. Roderick's henchman (or hunch-man) that is, his close attendant, is the principle courier; and as he successively passes by wedding or funeral, he calls the feaster or the mourner from his occupation, and summonses him to arms. Several new characters are here introduced, and our interest is still farther lost for the heroes and heroine of the first and second cantos. Roderick, as we premised, hears a song from Ellen at the end of this third canto; and after having lingered awhile near the rocky cave of Coir-Nan Uriskin, the refuge of the persecuted Douglasses, he joins his clansmen who are assembled in the vale below.

Now we are in hopes that we shall come to action, and see our favourites again; but alas! not yet. Our poet, as to the conduct of his story, seems to adopt the opinion of the Roman in other matters:

———"Non est properanda voluptas,
Sed sensim tardâ prolicienda morâ:"

but the "*limæ labor et mora*" is the delay which we recommend to him, both in forming his plan and in polishing his verse. Let his first composition of that verse, when he has arranged his subject, be as rapid as he pleases. "Flow on, flow unconstrained, my song!" may be his motto: but he should cast a lingering look back upon it in his cooler moments; and suffer not the world to see the reeking heat of composition, which exhibits the most immediate contact between the brain and the printing-press.

Malise, the henchman, and Norman of Ardmandave, one of the new characters, hold a dramatick dialogue at the commencement of the fourth canto, or *The Prophecy*, on the slaughter of "Duncraggan's

milk white bull" and other solemnities of the Taghairm. This being well over, we learn that the result of the prophet's speculations in the bull's hide is,

"Which spills the foremost foeman's life,
That party conquers in the strife."

Roderick announces the discovery of a spy in the neighbourhood, and that Red Murdoch is bribed to be his guide into the ambuscade of his foes. Malise now informs his chief of the approach "of Moray's silver star," and "the sable pale of Mar." Roderick rejoices at the advance of the king's party; and, hearing that he is not to expect any auxiliaries, he determines that

"Clan-Alpine's men
Shall man the Trosach's shaggy glen;
Within Loch Katrine's gorge we'll fight,
All in our maids' and matrons' sight,
Each for his hearth and household fire,
Father for child and son for sire,
Lover for maid beloved!—but why—
Is it the breeze affects mine eye?
Or dost thou come, ill-omen'd tear!
A messenger of doubt or fear?
No!" &c. &c.—

The chieftain gives his orders to his warlike clan, and the poet

"Turns him from the martial roar,
And seeks Coir-Uriskin once more."

With heartfelt joy do we accompany him to look for the gentle Ellen:

"Where is the Douglas? He is gone;
And Ellen sits on the gray stone
Fast by the cave, and makes her moan."

The aged minstrel, whose attachment to his lovely mistress, and whose whole character are most interesting, in vain endeavours to console her with hopes of her father's return. She fears that he is gone to the court, to do what she had done

"Had Douglas' daughter been his son!"

to beg grace for his friends, and to sacrifice himself. She fears also for

her lover, the youthful Græme, and even for Roderick. Allan sings to his listless hearer; and we wish, indeed, that we could have called off our attention from his song, as easily as the fair heroine. It is a fairy tale of the most childish nature, written in the idlest ballad-measure, and continuing through seven pages. We shall, however, say no more about it; for we are now agreeably surprised by the reappearance

"Of Snowdoun's knight, of James Fitz James."

This gay and gallant huntsman has returned, it seems, under the guidance of a highlander, whom Ellen suspects of treachery, to endeavour to persuade that mountain maid to elope with him to the lowlands. His horses wait at Bochastle, and he presses his suit. But Ellen, blushing to think that her female vanity, which was evidently pleased with his flattering attentions before, had now led him back into danger, perhaps into destruction, resolves to atone for that transient infidelity [which was unpardonable, according to our notions on the subject] to Malcolm, by confessing her love for him to Fitz James. This generous knight, who grows in favour with the reader every moment, beholding in Ellen's face the ingenuous soul of truth and modesty, then offers to attend her out of these dangerous seats of war, as a guide and a brother; but she warns him of the suspicions of Roderick. As he parts, he informs Ellen that he once chanced to save the life of the king of Scotland, who had given him a ring, which he was to present at court, when he had any favour to solicit. This ring he presents to Ellen, and tells her that, as he wants nothing from the king himself, she may claim her suit, whatever it may be, as ransom of the monarch's pledge to him. He then proceeds with his guide; who alarms him in the "Trosach's glen," with a loud whoop:

"'Murdoch, was that a signal cry?'
 He stammered forth, 'I shout to scare
 Yon raven from his dainty fare.'
 He looked—he knew the raven's prey,
 His own brave steed—'Ah! gallant gray!'
 &c. &c.

As they wind through the rocks, they
 behold, standing on a cliff beside the
 way,

"—— A wasted female form,
 Blighted by wrath of sun and storm,
 In tattered weeds and wild array."

This wretched maniac, Blanche of Devan, whose reason was overturned by the dreadful murder of her betrothed lover by the hand of Roderick Dhu, in one of his plundering excursions, is exquisitely described. Her wild airs are quite in character, natural, and pathetick. She warns Fitz James, in an obscure manner, of Murdoch's treachery, which is not unaccountable, as it may seem at first sight, since Murdoch might have been with Roderick at the assassination of her lover; and she tells Fitz James that she delights in his dress of Lincoln Green, which that lover also wore. The antipathy which she must feel to Murdoch would make her suspect him of treachery to a Lowlander; and moreover, she might have heard the Highlanders, in their neighbouring ambushade, talking of their expected victim.

Fitz James now draws his sword, and threatens Murdoch with death if he does not disclose his treachery. The Scot sets forth at full speed, and shoots an arrow in his flight, which grazes Fitz James's crest, "and thrills in Blanche's faded breast!" Fitz James pursues and slays Murdoch, and then hastens back to Blanche, whose reason is returning on the brink of death. She gives him a lock of yellow hair, in course that of her lover, and begs, with her dying breath, that, when he sees a darksome man

"Who boasts him chief of Alpine's clan,"

he will wreak vengeance on him for her wrongs. The knight blends the hair with a blood-stained lock from the head of poor Blanche, and vows to wear it in his bonnet, till he embues it in the best blood of Roderick Dhu. He then proceeds in his dangerous path alone; when, turning the corner of a rock, he is summoned to stand, by a mountaineer, at his watch-fire. This scene is excellently described. The frankness and high-souled courage of the two warriors; the reliance which the Lowlander places on the word of the Highlander to guide him safely on his way the next morning, to Coilantogle Ford, although he has spoken threatening and violent words against Roderick, whose kinsman the mountaineer professes himself to be; these circumstances are all admirably imagined and related. The rivals lie down side by side on the heather, and sleep till morning; and thus concludes the fourth canto.

We now come to the *chef d'œuvre* of Walter Scott. The fifth canto, or *The Combat*, contains a long scene of more vigour, nature, and animation than any other passage in all his poetry; much as that poetry abounds in these qualities. Fitz James and his guide proceed through the Trosach, towards Coilantogle Ford. As they slowly march along their difficult path, the conversation turns on Roderick Dhu, and the Lowlander does not spare the character of that highland chieftain. Nay, he expresses an open and daring wish to see the rebel and his band, and receives the following terrific answer; for, contrary to our intention, we cannot resist making a quotation in this place, although it will interrupt our detail of the plot:

"'Have, then, thy wish!' he whistled shrill,
 And he was answered from the hill;
 Wild as the scream of the curliu,
 From crag to crag the signal flew,
 Instant through copse and heath arose,
 Bonnets and spears and bended bows;
 On right, on left, above below,

Sprung up at once the lurking foe;
 From shingles gray their lances start,
 The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
 The rushes and the willow-wand
 Are bristling into axe and brand,
 And every tuft of broom gives life
 To plaided warrior armed for strife.
 That whistle garrison'd the glen
 At once with full five hundred men,
 As if the yawning hill to heaven
 A subterranean host had given.
 Watching their leader's beck and will,
 Ah! silent there they stood and still;
 Like the loose crags whose threatening
 mass

Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
 As if an infant's touch could urge
 Their headlong passage down the verge,
 With step and weapon forward flung,
 Upon the mountain side they hung.
 The mountaineer cast glance of pride
 Along Benledi's living side,
 Then fixed his eye and sable brow
 Full on Fitz James—"How say'st thou now?
 These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;
 And, Saxon, I am Roderick Dhu!"

We do not hesitate to declare that, as a living description of a highly interesting scene, the above passage appears to us worthy of any poet who ever wrote. We are, indeed, certain, that very few, in any age or country, will be found who were equal to its composition.

Fitz James, though startled, is undaunted; and the mountaineers, at the signal of their leader, disappear again among the thickets. Perhaps this description vies with the preceding. The chieftains now reach the Ford; and there a dreadful combat ensues between them, which is described with clearness, force, and vivacity, and which ends in favour of Fitz James. He then sounds his bugle; and four mounted squires soon gallop up to him. He proceeds rapidly towards Stirling; and two of the attendants follow more slowly, bearing the body of the wounded Roderick, on a steed which had been destined to carry off a gentler burthen. As Fitz James rides up the hill, he sees a tall, athletick figure, striding towards the castle, and recognises the Douglas. That noble chief, as he approaches Stirling, addresses it in very dignified strains;

and, perceiving preparations for festive sports in the park, he determines to join the throng, since he knows that king James, "the commons' king," will be present. The king and his court are described as witnesses of the sports, in all of which Douglas wins the principal prize. But one of the king's grooms striking a favourite grayhound belonging to that earl, he crushes the offender with one blow of his "stalwart hand." For this violence, the king orders Douglas to be carried prisoner to the castle. The mob rise to rescue him; and here, Oh! sad abuse of poetry! we have an allusion to recent tumults in the British metropolis. Surely this is "damning proof," if we had not internal evidence more than sufficient, of the fact, that the ink which traced the characters of this part of the poem, was not suffered to dry 'ere it reached the printing office! Douglas behaves better than the favourite of the people to whom the poet here covertly alludes, and enjoins their obedience to the laws, and their dispersion. This is too childish to be tolerated; but we are sure that our readers cannot need any assistance from us to discern and reprove such an instance of faulty taste; not to say, presumption on publick favour. The sports are broken up; and the canto concludes with a general account of the rumours of an engagement between the king's party and the clan of Roderick.

The sixth canto, entitled The Guard Room, opens with a good description of the morning (although we have, perhaps, had enough of this before) dawning on the castle yard, and the groupes of mercenary soldiers still prolonging their savage debauchery. One of them sings a song, which we do, indeed, wish that the author had not suffered to contaminate his pages, since it is equally destitute of wit and propriety. These are severe words, and we must prove the truth of them; but

at present we continue the story. The old minstrel and Ellen are now brought into the yard; and the anxious alarm, but dignified demeanour of the lady, in this shocking scene, are well depicted. On presenting Fitz James's ring to the captain of the guard Ellen is introduced into the castle; and the minstrel, at his own request, is carried to one of the dungeons to see his chief; but the chief to whom he is brought, turns out, to his surprise, to be Roderick Dhu, instead of the Douglas. This interview between the old bard and the dying warrior, is finely related; and the idea of the former singing to his harp an account of the battle in the Trosach, which he had witnessed the night before, while the latter struggles to show his joy at the valour of his clan, is excellently conceived. Roderick expires as the song concludes; and the minstrel breathes his requiem in very moving strains.

The scene now turns to Ellen, who is anxiously waiting the result of her message to the king, in an apartment where she hears the sound of a voice not unknown to her, and from the subject of the song Malcolm is discovered to be imprisoned (although we are not told how and when) in some chamber very near to her. Fitz James now appears, and conducts Ellen through a suite of rooms to the presence chamber; where, to her astonishment, and that of the reader,

"All stood bare, and in the room,
Fitz James alone wore cap and plume.
To him each lady's look was lent,
On him each courtier's eye was bent;
Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
The centre of the glittering ring;—
And Snowdown's knight is Scotland's
king!"

This denouement is as unexpected and pleasing as any similar discovery which we ever encountered in romance; and it is admirably delayed and concealed. The circum-

stances of James's real life furnish sufficient ground for the incident. We need hardly add that Douglas is pardoned; that Malcolm Græme is called out in playful seeming of anger; that the fetters imposed on him are golden links; and that the clasp of the chain is laid by the generous monarch on Ellen's hand.— Thus ends the poem; which, with all its defects in the conduct of the story, has alternately elevated and depressed us, and is certainly the most interesting as a whole of any of Mr. Scott's compositions. We now proceed to make some extracts; which will at once, we think, confirm our general commendation of this writer, and substantiate our particular objections to such as we conceive to be his prominent errors.

Why will not Mr. Scott more frequently write in the manly and poetical style of the introduction to his first canto?

"Harp of the North! that mouldering long
hast hung
On the witch elm that shades Saint
Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers
flung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every
string,—
O minstrel harp, still must thine ac-
cents sleep
Mid rustling leaves, and fountains mur-
muring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their si-
lence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a
maid to weep?

"Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,
Was thy voice mute amid the festal
crowd,
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful or subdued the
proud.
At each according pause, was heard aloud,
Thine ardent symphony sublime and
high,
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention
bowed;
For still the burthen of thy minstrelsy,
Was knighthood's dauntless deed, and
beauty's matchless eye.

"O wake once more! how rude so e'er
the hand,
That ventures o'er thy magick maze to
stray;
O wake once more! though scarce my skill
command,
Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay:
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die
away,
And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway,
The wizard note has not been touched
in vain.
Then silent be no more! Enchantress,
wake again!"

This is a measure worthy to try
the strength of a poet. The verse
of eight feet is boy's play compared
to it; although we are happy in bear-
ing testimony to the improvement of
the author in the regularity of that
verse. His rugged lines are much
fewer than in his former poems:—
but we must observe a carelessness
in suffering similar rhymes to recur
much too frequently; and a correct
ear would have avoided the homo-
tonous terminations of the first five
lines of the above extract.

We wish that our limits would
allow a specimen of the powers of
landscape-painting which are emi-
nently displayed by Mr. Scott in the
first canto. But we prefer a sketch
of animated nature, and choose the
following:

"The boat had touched this silver strand,
Just as the hunter left his stand,
And stood concealed amid the brake
To view this Lady of the Lake.
The maiden paused, as if again
She thought to catch the distant strain,
With head up-raised, and look intent,
And eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips apart,
Like monument of Grecian art.
In listening mood she seemed to stand,
The guardian Naiad of the strand.

"And ne'er did Grecian chizel trace
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
Of finer form, or lovelier face!
What though the sun, with ardent frown,
Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown:
The sportive toil, which short and light,
Had died her glowing hue so bright,
Served too, in hastier swell, to show
Short glimpses of a breast of snow;

What though no rule of courtly grace
To measured mood had trained her pace;
A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dashed the
dew;

E'en the slight hare-bell raised it's head,
Elastic from her airy tread:
What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue:
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
The listener held his breath to hear."

The "slight hare-bell raising its
head" under the foot of Ellen, is one
of the stale hyperboles of poetry;
and Mr. Scott should be above such
petty larceny from the stock-images
of his predecessors. All these un-
natural compliments to beauty sa-
vour of a puerile taste; but the whole
passage is very elegant.

We have already, as we passed,
manifested the poet's improper fond-
ness for the epithet "stalwart." We
beg leave to enter our protest also
against the noun "snood," and the
verb "spy," perpetually repeated.
But it would be endless to specify
objections to Mr. Scott's phrases.
Whether it be English, Scotch, or
French, which his rhyme demands,
he uses any of them indifferently;
and here we meet with a "reveille,"
and here with a "brae," or a "cor-
rei." This really puts us in mind of
a whimsical excuse lately made for
a certain poem, which is written in
a most unintelligible style, that, as
the story was Pennsylvanian, it was
fitting that the language should be
so too. Another, and an equal fault
of Mr. Scott's diction, is his con-
tinual omission of the relative
"which;" the inglorious facility of
"clipping the king's English," with-
in the circumference of the verse,
which this omission affords, should
be despised by a man of genius. In
the same manner, the preterite is
sacrificed for the participle, when
rhyme demands the termination
which the latter will afford; as thus:
"A signal to his squire he flung,
Who instant to his stirrup *sprung*." p. 218.
So also *sudden*, in the line preceding
these two, and *instant* in the last of

them, are used adverbially; but for this license, we fear, Mr. Scott may plead so many precedents that poor Priscian will scarcely stand his ground. To get rid of the unpleasant task of censure at once, we shall here select one of the author's songs, on which, in general, we have bestowed such severe reprehension. It is the soldier's song, mentioned above in terms which we are unfeignedly sorry to use, but on the justice of which we appeal to our reader's decision.

SOLDIER'S SONG.

"Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule
Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl.
That there's wrath and despair in the jolly black jack,
And the seven deadly sins in a flaggon of sack;
Yet whoop, Barnaby! off with the liquor.
Drink upsees out, and a fig for the vicar!"

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip,
The ripe, ruddy dew of a woman's dear lip,
Says, that Belzebub lurks in her 'kerchief so sly,
And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black eye;
Yet whoop, Jack! kiss Gillian the quicker,
Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar thus preaches—and why should he not?
For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot;
And 'tis right of his office poor laymen to lurch,
Who infringe the domains of our good mother church.
Yet whoop, bully-boys! off with your liquor,
Sweet Marjory's the word, and a fig for the vicar!"

It will not, surely, be urged in justification of this balderdash, that it is in character, and natural. This reason would, perhaps, justify, or rather palliate some of the swearing in Smollett's novels: but, as an excuse for such barbarism in a serious poem, it reminds us of Voltaire's famous reply to an adversary who

pleaded "nature" as an apology for some glaring incongruities in composition: "*Avec permission, Monsieur, mon — est bien naturel, et cependant je porte des culottes.*"

Can it be true that this song, or the fairy tale of Alice Brand (as bad as the celebrated poem of Alice Fell) in the 4th canto, or the hymn to the Virgin:

"Ave Maria, STainless STyled?"

or the Coronagh, in the third, or several other passages which we forbear to specify; can it really be, we say, that these things are written by the author of the following beautiful lines?

"*Nil fuit sic unquam impar sibi!*"

The lines are selected from the dream of Fitz James in the first canto:

"Again returned the scenes of youth
Of confident undoubting truth;
Again his soul he interchanged
With friends whose hearts were long estranged.
They come, in dim procession led,
The cold, the faithless, and the dead;
As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
As if they parted yesterday.
And doubt distracts him at the view,
O were his senses false or true!
Dreamed he of death, or broken vow,
Or is it all a vision now?"

At length with Ellen in a grove,
He seemed to walk and speak of love."
&c. &c.

The succeeding lines are equally pleasing. But we have no room for more than another extract. That our justice may be exactly measured, we shall, however, again praise the song of Ellen, in the first, and of the minstrel in the second canto, and that of the lover in the 4th. The Boat-song we have already mentioned as spirited, although the chorus sounds barbarously to any but a Scottish ear. We shall add, that every canto displays beauties of the most varied description, too numerous for us to specify; and we shall select, as a finale to our panegyrick, the Lament over Roderick in the last canto:

LAMENT.

"And art thou cold and lowly laid,
Thy foeman's dread, thy people's aid,
Breadalbane's boast, Clan-Alpine's shade!
For thee shall none a requiem say?—
For thee, who loved the minstrel's lay,
For thee, of Bothwell's house the stay,
The shelter of her exiled line,—
E'en in this prison-house of thine,
I'll wait for Alpine's honoured pine!

What groans shall yonder valleys fill!
What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill!
What tears of burning rage shall thrill,
When mourns thy tribe thy battles done,
Thy fall before the race was won,
Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun!
There breathes not clansman of thy line
But would have given his life for thine.—
O woe for Alpine's honoured pine!

"Sad was thy lot on mortal stage!—
The captive thrush may brook the cage,
The prisoned eagle dies for rage.
Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain!
And, when its notes awake again,
Even she, so long beloved in vain,
Shall with my harp her voice combine
And mix her woe and tears with mine,
To wail Clan-Alpine's honoured pine."

We may just observe that the notes contain some amusing stories, with others that are dull, and shall now take our leave of Mr. Scott, ex-

pressing a most sincere wish that his farewell address to his harp may not be more serious than the farewell addresses of poets usually are; and adding that we hope our plainly specified objections to parts of his poem, whether they be faults in the conduct of the plot, or inaccuracies of diction, will induce his numerous imitators at least to pause, ere they contribute farther to the wide corruption of our taste, which is occasioned by such servility. We wish that we might reasonably imagine that their great original himself, animated by the noble hope of living in the praises of posterity, would even now, in the full tide of his present fame and popularity, lend an ear to our admonitions! Then might he soar like his own eagle, and silence all his contemporaries:

"The shrinking band stood oft aghast;
At the impatient glance he cast;—
Such glance the mountain eagle threw,
As, from the cliffs of Ben-venue,
She spread her dark sails on the wind,
And, high in middle heaven reclined,
With her broad shadow on the lake,
Silenced the warblers of the brake."

p. 100.

FROM THE QUARTERLY REVIEW.

Fatal Revenge; or the Family of Montorio. A Romance. By Dennis Jasper Murphy.
3 vols 8vo. London. 1807.

J'APPRENDS d'être *vif*. Such was the noted answer of a German baron who had alarmed a whole Parisian hotel by leaping over joint-stools in his solitary apartment. This mode of qualifying himself for the lively conversation of the French was probably attended with some fatigue to the worthy *Frei-herr's* person, and perhaps some damage to his shins; with which we the more readily sympathise, as, in compliance with the hint of several well meaning friends, we are just taking the pen after some desperate efforts

pour apprendre à être vif. It was whispered to us, in no unfriendly voice, that we were respectable classical scholars; divines at least as serious as was necessary; tolerable politicians considering the old-fashioned nature of our principles; and as good philosophers as could be expected of persons obviously trammelled by belief in the tenets which, in compliance with ancient custom, are still delivered once in seven days to those who choose to hear them. It seemed farther to be allowed, that we were indifferent good hands at a

sarcasm, and displayed some taste for poetry; but still we were not lively; that is, we had none of those light and airy articles which a young lady might read while her hair was papering. To sum up all in one dismal syllable, it was insinuated that we were *dull*. To prove the futility of the charge, we resolved to extend the sphere of our inquiries, and to review not only the grave and weighty, but the flitting and evanescent productions of the times, for the purpose of giving full scope to our ingenuity, and evincing the vivacity of our talents, so wantonly called in question. The want of proper subjects for the exercise of our powers was the first dilemma. We had no friendly correspondent at the court of Paris, who, with a sentimental flourish on the peace which ought to subsist in the republick of letters, though war raged between the respective countries of the sages, might forward, through some kind neutral, the last new novel or the latest philosophical discovery of the institute, and only expect us, in requital, to give the wit, and learning, and science of the Great Nation, its reasonable and just precedence over those of our own country. What then was to be done? After some consideration, we sent to our publisher for an assortment of the newest and most fashionable novels, hoping to find, among the frivolous articles of domestick manufacture, something to supply the want of foreign importation. It is from a laborious inspection into the contents of this packet, or rather hamper, that we are now risen with the painful conviction that spirits and patience may be as completely exhausted in perusing trifles as in following algebraical calculations.—Before proceeding, however, to the novel, selected almost at random for the subject of a few remarks, we cannot but express our surprise at the present degradation of this class of compositions.

The elegant and fascinating productions which honoured the name of novel, those which Richardson, Mackenzie, and Burney gave to the publick, of which it was the object to exalt virtue and degrade vice; to which no fault could be objected unless that they unfitted here and there a romantick mind for the common intercourse of life, while they refined, perhaps, a thousand whose faculties could better bear the fair ideal which they presented; these have entirely vanished from the shelves of the circulating library. It may, indeed, be fairly alleged in defence of those who decline attempting this higher and more refined species of composition, that the soil was in some degree exhausted by over-cropping; that the multitude of base and tawdry imitations obscured the merit of the few which are tolerable, as the overwhelming blaze of blue, red, green, and yellow, at the exhibition, vitiates our taste for the few good paintings which show their modest hues upon its walls. The publick was, indeed, weary of the protracted embarrassments of lords and ladies who spoke such language as was never spoken, and still more so of the see-saw correspondence between the sentimental lady Lucretia and the witty miss Caroline, who battledored it in the pathetick and the lively, like Morton and Reynolds on the stage. But let us be just to dead and to living merit. In some of the novels of the late Charlotte Smith, we found no ordinary portion of that fascinating power which leads us through every various scene of happiness or distress at the will of the author; which places the passions of the wise and grave for a time at the command of ideal personages; and, perhaps, has more attraction for the publick at large than any other species of literary composition, the drama not excepted. Nor do we owe less to Miss Edgeworth, whose true and vivid pictures of modern life contain the

only sketches reminding us of the human beings, whom, secluded as we are, we have actually seen and conversed with in various parts of this great metropolis.

When we had removed from the surface of our hamper a few thin volumes of simple and insipid sentiment; taken a moment's breath; and exclaimed: "O Athenians, how hard we labour for your applause!" we lighted upon a class of books which excited sterner sensations. There existed formerly a species of novel of a tragi-comick nature, which, far from pretending to the extreme sentiment and delicacy of the works last mentioned, admitted, like the elder English comedy, a considerable dash of coarse and even indelicate humour. Such were the compositions of Fielding; and such of Smollet, the literary Hogarth, whose figures, though they seldom attained grace or elegance, were marked with indelible truth and peculiarity of character. Instead of this kind of comick satire, in which, to borrow a few words of old Withers, abuses, when whipped, were perhaps stripped a little too bare, we have now the lowest denizens of Grub-street, narrating, under the flimsy veil of false names, and through the medium of a fictitious tale, all that malevolence can invent, and stupidity propagate, concerning private misfortunes and personal characters. We have our winters in London, Bath, and Brighton, of which it is the dirty object to drag forth the secret history of the day, and to give to scandal a court of written record. The talent which most of these things indicate is that of the lowest newspaper composition, and the acquaintance with the fashionable world precisely what might be gleaned from the footman or porter; while the portraits of Bow-street officers, swindlers, and bailiffs, are possibly drawn from a more intimate acquaintance. The shortness of our cruise has not yet permitted us to

fall in with any of these picaroons; but let them beware, as lieutenant Bowling says, how they come athwart our hawser; "we shall mind running them down no more than so many porpoises."

"Plunging from depth to depth a vast profound," we at length imagined ourselves arrived at the Limbus Patrum in good earnest. The imitators of Mrs. Radcliffe and Mr. Lewis were before us; personages, who, to all the faults and extravagancies of their originals, added that of dulness, with which they can seldom be charged. We strolled through a variety of castles, each of which was regularly called *Il Castello*; met with as many captains of condottieri; heard various ejaculations of Santa Maria and Diavolo; read by a decaying lamp, and in a tapestried chamber, dozens of legends as stupid as the main history; examined such suites of deserted apartments as might fit up a reasonable barrack, and saw as many glimmering lights as would make a respectable illumination. Amid these flat imitations of the castle of Udolpho, we lighted, unexpectedly, upon the work which is the subject of the present article, and, in defiance of the very bad taste in which it is composed, we found ourselves insensibly involved in the perusal, and at times impressed with no common degree of respect for the powers of the author. We have, at no time, more earnestly desired to extend our voice to a bewildered traveller, than towards this young man, whose taste is so inferior to his powers of imagination and expression, that we never saw a more remarkable instance of genius degraded by the labour in which it is employed. It is the resentment and regret which we experience at witnessing the abuse of these qualities, as well as the wish to hazard a few remarks upon the romantick novel in general, which has induced us (though we are obliged to go back a little) to

offer our criticism on the "Fatal Revenge, or the House of Montorio."

It is scarcely possible to abridge the narrative, nor would the attempt be edifying or entertaining. A short abstract of the story is all for which we can afford room. It is introduced in the following striking manner.

"At the siege of Barcelona by the French, in the year 1697, two young officers entered into the service at its most hot and critical period. Their appearance excited some surprise and perplexity. Their melancholy was Spanish; their accent Italian; their names and habits French.

"They distinguished themselves in the service by a kind of careless and desperate courage, that appeared equally insensible of praise or of danger. They forced themselves into all the coups de main, the wild and perilous sallies, that abound in a spirited siege, and mark it with a greater variety and vivacity of character than a regular campaign. Here they were in their element. But among their brother officers, so cold, so distant, so repulsive, that even they who loved their courage, or were interested in their melancholy, stood aloof in awkward and hesitating sympathy. Still, though they would not accept the offices of the benevolence their appearance inspired, they were, involuntarily, always conciliating. Their figures and motions were so eminently noble and striking, their affection for each other so conspicuous, and their youthful melancholy so deep and hopeless, that every one inquired, and sought intelligence of them from an impulse stronger than curiosity. Nothing could be learnt; nothing was known, or even conjectured of them.

"During the siege, an Italian officer, of middle age, arrived to assume the command of a post of distinction. His first meeting with these young men was remarkable. They stood speechless, and staring at each other for some time. In the mixture of emotions that passed over their countenances, no one predominant or decisive could be traced by the many and anxious witnesses that surrounded them.

"As soon as they separated, the Italian officer was persecuted with inquiries about the strangers. He answered none of them; yet he admitted that he knew circumstances sufficiently extraordinary relating to the young men, who, he said, were natives of Italy.

"A few days after, Barcelona was taken by the French forces. The assault was

terrible; the young officers were in the very rage of the fight; they coveted and courted danger; they stood amid showers of grape and ball; they rushed into the heart and crater of explosions; they literally "wrought in the fire." The effects of their dreadful courage were foreseen by all; and cries of recall and expostulation sounded around them on every side, in vain.

"On the French taking possession of the town, there was a general demand for the brothers. With difficulty the bodies were discovered, and brought, with melancholy pomp, into the commander's presence. The Italian officer was there; every eye was turned on him." *Introd.* pp. ix—xiii.

The history of these mysterious brethren is told by the officer who had recognised them, and runs briefly thus: Orazio, count of Montorio, for we begin our story with the explanation, which in the original concludes it, possessed of wealth, honours, and ancestry, is married to a beautiful woman, whom he loves doatingly, but of whose affections he is not possessed. A villanous brother instils into his mind jealousy of a cavalier to whom the countess had formerly been attached. Orazio causes the supposed paramour to be murdered in the presence of the lady, who also dies. He then flies from his country with the feelings of desperation thus forcibly described:—

"My reason was not suspended: it was totally *changed*. I had become a kind of intellectual savage; a being that, with the malignity and depravation of inferiour natures, still retains the reason of a man, and retains it only for his curse. Oh! that midnight darkness of the soul, in which it seeks for something whose loss has carried away every sense but one of utter and desolate privation; in which it traverses leagues in motion and worlds in thought, without consciousness of relief, yet with a dread of pausing. I had nothing to seek, nothing to recover. The whole world could not restore me an atom, could not show me again a glimpse of what I had been or lost; yet I rushed on as if the next step would reach shelter and peace." *vol. iii.* p. 380.

In this maniack state, he reaches an uninhabited islet in the Grecian

archipelago, where, from a conversation accidentally overheard between two assassins sent by his brother to murder him, the wretched Orazio learns the innocence of his victims, and the full extent of his misery. He contrives to murder the murderers, and the effect of the subsequent discovery upon his feelings, is described in a strain of language which we were alternately tempted to admire as sublime and to reprobate as bombastick.

Orazio determines on revenge, and his plan is diabolically horrid. He resolved to accomplish the murder of his treacherous brother, who, in consequence of his supposed death, had now assumed the honours of the family; and he farther determined that this act of vengeance should be perpetrated by the hands of that very brother's own sons, two amiable youths, who had no cloud upon their character excepting an attachment to mysterious studies, and a strong propensity to superstition.

We do not mean to trace this agent of vengeance through the various devices and stratagems by which he involved in his toils his unsuspecting nephews, assumed in their apprehension the character of an infernal agent, and decoyed them, first to meditate upon, and at length actually to perpetrate, the parricide which was the crown and summit of his wishes. The doctrine of fatalism, on which he principally relied for reconciling his victims to his purpose, is in various passages detailed with much gloomy and terrifick eloquence. The rest of his machinery is composed of banditti, caverns, dungeons, inquisitors, trapdoors, ruins, secret passages, soothsayers, and all the usual accoutrements from the property room of Mrs. Radcliffe. The horror of the piece is completed by the murderer discovering that the youths whom he has taken such pains to involve in parricide are not the sons of his brother, but his own offspring by his unfortunate

wife. We do not dwell upon any of these particulars, because the observations which we have to hazard upon this neglected novel apply to a numerous class of the same kind, and because the incidents are such as are to be found in most of them.

In the first place, then, we disapprove of the mode introduced by Mrs. Radcliffe, and followed by Mr. Murphy and her other imitators, of winding up their story with a solution by which all the incidents appearing to partake of the mystick and marvellous are resolved by very simple and natural causes. This seems, to us, to savour of the precaution of Snug the joiner; or, rather, it is as if the machinist, when the pantomime was over, should turn his scenes "the seamy side without," and expose the mechanical aids by which the delusions were accomplished. In one respect, indeed, it is worse management; because the understanding spectator might be, in some degree, gratified by the view of engines, which, however rude, were well adapted to produce the effects which he had witnessed. But the machinery of the castle of Montorio, when exhibited, is wholly inadequate to the gigantick operations ascribed to it. There is a total and absolute disproportion between the cause and the effect, which must disgust every reader much more than if he were left under the delusion of ascribing the whole to supernatural agency. This latter resource has, indeed, many disadvantages; some of which we shall briefly notice. But it is an admitted expedient; appeals to the belief of all ages but our own; and still produces, when well managed, some effect, even upon those who are most disposed to condemn its influence. We can, therefore, allow of supernatural agency to a certain extent and for an appropriate purpose, but we never can consent that the effect of such agency shall be finally attributed to natural causes

totally inadequate to its production. We can believe, for example, in Macbeth's witches, and tremble at their spells; but had we been informed, at the conclusion of the piece, that they were only three of his wife's chambermaids disguised, for the purpose of imposing on the Thane's credulity, it would have added little to the credibility of the story, and entirely deprived it of the interest. In like manner, we fling back upon the Radcliffe school their flat and ridiculous explanations, and plainly tell them that they must either confine themselves to ordinary and natural events, or find adequate causes for those horrors and mysteries in which they love to involve us. Yet another word on this subject. We know not if a novel writer of the present day expects or desires his labours to be perused oftener than once; but as there may be here and there a maiden aunt in a family, for whose advantage it must be again read over by the young lady who has already devoured it in secret, we advise them to consider how much they suffer from their adherence to this unfortunate system. We will instance the incident of the black veil in the castle of Udolpho.—Attention is excited, and afterwards recalled, by a hundred indirect artifices, to the dreadful and unexplained mystery which the heroine had seen beneath it; and which, after all, proves to be neither more nor less than a waxen doll. This trick may, indeed, for once, answer the writer's purpose; and has, we suppose, cost many an extra walk to the circulating library, and many a curse upon the malicious concurrent who always has the fourth volume in hand. But it is as impossible to re-peruse the book without feeling the contempt awakened by so pitiful a contrivance as it is for a child to regain his original respect for king Solomon, after he has seen the monarch disrobed of all his glory, and deposited in the same box with

Punch and his wife. And, in fact, we feel inclined to abuse the author in such a case as the watch do Harlequin, when they find out his trick of frightening them by mimicking the report of a pistol.

Faquin, maraud, pendard, impudent, temeraire,

Vous osez nous faire peur!

In the second place, we are of opinion that the terrors of this class of novel writers are too accumulated and unremitting. The influence of fear, and here we extend our observations as well to those romances which actually ground it upon supernatural prodigy as to those which attempt a subsequent explanation, is, indeed, a faithful and legitimate key to unlock every source of fancy and of feeling. Mr. Murphy's introduction is expressed with the spirit and animation which, though often misdirected, pervade his whole work.

"I question whether there be a source of emotion in the whole mental frame so powerful or universal as *the fear arising from objects of invisible terror*. Perhaps there is no other that has been, at some period or other of life, the predominant and indelible sensation of every mind, of every class, and under every circumstance. Love, supposed to be the most general of passions, has certainly been felt in its purity by very few, and by some not at all, even in its most indefinite and simple state.

"The same might be said, *à fortiori*, of other passions. But who is there that has never feared? Who is there that has not involuntarily remembered the gossip's tale in solitude or in darkness? Who is there that has not sometimes shivered under an influence he would scarce acknowledge to himself? I might trace this passion to a high and obvious source.

"It is enough for my purpose to assert its existence and prevalency, which will scarcely be disputed by those who remember it. It is absurd to depreciate this passion, and deride its influence. It is *not* the weak and trivial impulse of the nursery, to be forgotten and scorned by manhood. It is the aspiration of a spirit; 'it is the passion of immortals,' that dread and desire of their final habitation." Pref. p. 4 and 5.

We grant there is much truth in this proposition, taken generally. But the finest and deepest feelings are those which are most easily exhausted. The chord which vibrates and sounds at a touch, remains in silent tension, under continued pressure. Besides, terrour, as Bob Acres says of its counterpart, courage, will come and go; and few people can afford timidity enough for the writer's purpose, who is determined on "horrifying" them through three thick volumes. The vivacity of the emotion also depends greatly upon surprise, and surprise cannot be repeatedly excited during the perusal of the same work. It is said, respecting the cruel punishment of breaking alive upon the wheel, that the sufferer's nerves are so much jarred by the first blow, that he feels comparatively little pain from those which follow. There is something of this in moral feeling; nor do we see a better remedy for it than to recommend the cessation of these experiments upon the publick, until their sensibility shall have recovered its original tone. The taste for the marvellous has been, indeed, compared to the habit of drinking ardent liquors. But it fortunately differs in having its limits. He upon whom one dram does not produce the effect, can attain the desired degree of inebriation by doubling the dose. But when we have ceased to start at one ghost, we are callous to the exhibition of a whole Pandemonium. In short, the sensation is generally as transient as it is powerful, and commonly depends upon some slight circumstances which cannot be repeated.

"The time has been, our senses would have cooled
To hear a night-shriek, and our fell of hair
Would, at a dismal treatise, rouse and stir
As life were in't. We have supped full with
horrors;
And direness, now familiar to our thoughts,
Cannot once start us."

VOL. IV.

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These appear to us the great disadvantages under which any author must at present struggle, who chooses supernatural terrour for his engine of moving the passions. We dare not call them insurmountable; for how shall we dare to limit the efforts of genius, or shut against its possessor any avenue to the human heart, or its passions? Mr. Murphy himself, for aught we know, may be destined to show us the prudence of this qualification. He possesses a strong and vigorous fancy, with great command of language. He has, indeed, regulated his incidents upon those of others, and, therefore, added to the imperfections which we have pointed out, the want of originality. But his feeling and conception of character are his own, and from these we judge of his powers. In truth we rose from his strange, chaotick novel romance, as from a confused and feverish dream, unrefreshed, and unamused, yet strongly impressed by many of the ideas which had been so vaguely and wildly presented to our imagination.

It remains to notice the pieces of poetry scattered through these volumes, many of which claim our attention: but we cannot stop to criticise them. There is a wild and desultory elegy, Vol. II. pp. 305—309, which, though not always strictly metrical, has passages of great pathos, as well as fancy. If the author of it be, indeed, as he describes himself, young and inexperienced, without literary friend, or counsellor, we earnestly exhort him to seek one on whose taste and judgment he can rely. He is now, like an untutored colt, wasting his best vigour in irregular efforts, without either grace or object; but there is much in these volumes which promises a career that may at some future time astonish the publick.

FROM THE BRITISH CRITICK.

The Refusal. A Novel. By the author of the *Tale of the Times*; *Infidel Father*, &c.
12mo. 2 vols. 1*l.* 1*s.* 1810.

THE writings of Mrs. West are distinguished always, not only by their ingenuity and originality, but also by their powerful tendency to promote the best objects, morality and religion. In the present production, all these qualities are conspicuous, and, though we might recommend it strongly, and, perhaps, effectually, in a very few words, we are tempted to depart from that conciseness, with which we usually notice works of this class, for the sake of laying before our readers a few of those passages which are more particularly excellent.

With the most indispensable quality of a novel, that of exciting curiosity and interest, *The Refusal* is successfully endowed. It is as attractive as the idle can wish, and as instructive as the moralist can demand. The latter quality, without the former, would be of small avail; it would be like a feast of physick, to which no one would sit down, however it might be recommended for salubrity. No such effect can be apprehended here. The principal characters are interesting, and in many respects original. The subordinate personages are amusing. An important secret is intimated in the beginning, concerning which the reader never ceases to feel an interest, till it is developed, which is near the end of the tale. In drawing her principal character, that of lord Avondel, Mrs. West has ventured upon an arduous task. She has undertaken, and we think with success, to represent an able and high-minded statesman, of pure and disinterested patriotism, whose chief foible is that strong desire of general approbation, which is but too apt to insinuate itself into men who feel conscious of extraordinary powers. The best parts of lord Avondel's

character, she seems to have sketched from an original, which we know, from her other writings, to have had her high admiration, the publick character of Mr. Pitt. The foibles which she has thrown in, were not to be found in that model; but they serve to render the character more dramatick, and to bring about the catastrophe. The gentle and amiable character of lady Avondel is highly interesting; and, though by her extreme diffidence and timidity, when placed in an elevated situation, she a little loses the esteem of the reader, as well as that of her husband, yet she recovers both in a natural and effectual manner, when driven, by circumstances, to act with an energy, of which she had no previous consciousness.

The great lesson inculcated by the whole narrative, is the imperfectness of the highest human motives, and the perfect operation of those supplied by religion, in the most trying situations that can be imagined. Subordinate to that is the sacredness of the conjugal tie, and the danger, as well as immorality of yielding even to mental infidelity. With the management of the events in the latter part of the story, we are, in general, highly satisfied. Perhaps, in one instance, the character of lord A. is lowered rather more than is consistent with some of the qualities described as inherent in him; but it was necessary to give a strong instance of the danger of misplaced reliance: and from that cause, so much evil may be produced, even in the strongest minds, that it is difficult to pronounce what is improbable, or at least impossible for it to effect. Mrs. West has managed the catastrophe of her tale according to her own ideas of poetical justice, in which we completely agree; nothing

being, in our opinion, more pernicious than the common doctrine of novels, that virtue is always finally happy, and vice miserable in this world; a position which every view of real life contradicts, and which gives an importance to worldly prosperity or adversity, inconsistent with true religious principles. What Mrs. West advances on this subject is so well founded, and well expressed, that we shall do a publick service by giving additional circulation to her sentiments.

"Poetical justice is so little similar to real life, that I am apt to consider the constant attendance to the maxim, that 'though vice triumphs for a time, virtue is always victorious at the last,' which the fashion of literature now requires, to be one cause of the prevailing sentiment, that temporal prosperity is the criterion of merit: an opinion which peculiarizes the present age, though it is equally contradicted by Scripture and history; I mean, if by merit we understand virtue. Nor have we any reason to recur to past ages, as the present furnishes many striking examples in publick and private life, of the most atrocious wickedness becoming remarkable by an uninterrupted career of good fortune.

"Why then does poetical justice require us always to visit those offences with visible punishments, which the Almighty oftener spares? To be instructive, fiction must be a faithful imitation of real events, chosen with skill, and adapted to moral improvement. Surely, one reason for this rapid repetition of a flattering deception, is, that prosperity, 'the god of this world,' has taken such hold of our hearts, that we can form no conception of happiness, or even tranquillity, but as plants growing under the shade of his temple. We underrate 'that peace of God which passeth all understanding,' and we believe 'the worm which dieth not' is too feeble an instrument of torture for unrepentant sin, unless poverty and affliction envelop it in sackcloth and ashes. Even moral writers often insist on the necessity of decorating virtue with adventitious splendours, in the face of those divine precepts which teach us, that if we will be faithful soldiers of our master we must expect to be assailed by outward conflicts of sorrow as well as temptation, though, if we resist the one, and endure the other, we shall have inward repose.

"Still, I willingly admit, nothing has so great a tendency in the common course of things, to exalt a nation as universal justice, benevolence, temperance, and piety. Whenever the practice of these virtues becomes general, publick prosperity and the success of good individuals will be combined by the same course of events, but while vices of a contrary description prevail, they who would preserve their innocence must arm their minds to expect disappointments and vexations, a conflict and not a crown. But if their hearts are right with God, these evils will be infinitely counterpoised by a calm serenity of mind, arising from a victory over irregular desires, a patient dependance on unerring wisdom, a happy consciousness of acting as they ought, and such a moderate estimation of this world as renders them, at once thankful for its blessings, and unensnared by its enjoyments. And the certainty of that event which poisons all the pleasures of vice and luxury, administers ineffable consolation to those who consider the present state of things as probationary not retributive.

"It is not with a view to diminish the incentives to a life of virtue, but to place them on a steadfast basis, that I wish to discourage the habit of teaching youth, that there is an absolute connexion between goodness and success, while their future experience must show it to be uncertain and precarious. And even granting that the temporal rewards of virtue were less arbitrary, by instructing the opening mind to expect them, do we not inculcate that vice of selfishness which is so opposite to the Christian temper, and so subversive of publick spirit, on which the safety of our empire, humanly speaking, depends? The rising generation will probably be called to the most strenuous exertions, the most severe sacrifices. Let them, therefore, be taught to look for happiness in the inward consciousness of acting as they ought. Prosperity may be the portion of true worth, or it may not, just as suits the grand designs of Providence, or its own spiritual advantage; but the riches of a contented, well regulated mind are its certain portion." Vol. 111. p. 400.

Some very excellent remarks on this subject appeared in a French journal, in 1807*, signed CH. VC. in opposition to a M. Bonald, who had written on the morality of tragedy. A few of these, as the work is not much circulated in this country,

* *Esprit des Journaux*, Juillet 1807, p. 185 et seqq."

we shall subjoin, in confirmation of Mrs. West's sentiments.

"Je pourrais étendre et développer ici de que j'ai avancé plus haut sur les dangers quel'on court, en cherchant à porter le peuple à la vertu, par l'observation de la justice politique. Le moindre de ces dangers est qu'il ne voie dans vos instructions que des fraudes pieuses, et qu'il vous prenne pour de bonnes gens, qui veulent lui montrer le monde autrement qu'il n'est, comme s'il devait s'en rapporter à vos fictions plutôt qu'à la histoire, et à son expérience. Le mal sera bien plus grand s'il vient ensuite à réfléchir, et à se dire: on veut que je fasse le bien, et que j'évite le mal pour être heureux; mais si le bonheur est mon but principal, c'est à ma sagesse d'en choisir les voies. Et que sera-ce, s'il observe avec nous que le poète devient alors une Providence bien plus juste que Dieu même, pour les êtres de sa création. Ce contraste entre la scène tragique (and it applies equally to other fictions) et celle du monde sera t'il bien propre à lui inspirer cette soumission aux décrets éternels, cette résignation aux ordres de Dieu, cette résignation silencieuse pour ses impénétrables desseins, qui sont le devoir du vrai Chrétien, comme du véritable philosophe" p. 201.

Many other arguments are accumulated, to the same effect, which fully confirm the sentiments of Mrs. W. In consequence of these principles, the conclusion of this novel, if not so pleasing to some readers as it might have been made, is solemnly and materially instructive; and the situation in which the heroine is finally left, gives not only an additional interest, but a new elevation to her character. It is in the third volume that the moral is developed, and, therefore, that the most instructive parts of the novel occur. To this, therefore, we shall confine our extracts. So much just observation of human character appears in the following passage, that we shall with pleasure copy it.

"Though free from every taint of vanity, lady Selina rejoiced at perceiving she had regained her influence over his [lord Avondel's] mind, and she hoped in the calm intercourse of friendship, which

now promised to gild their declining days, to communicate gradually (for her knowledge of the human heart discouraged the expectation of sudden changes) to this idolater of honour, this man of unswerving rectitude, this consummate hero, and accomplished gentleman, that pious humility, and meek resignation, which she had learned while languishing on the bed of pain, or suffering in silence the mental tortures of undeserved reproach, heart-wounding disappointment, and contemptuous neglect. Without the means of solacing her griefs by the reflected pleasures of beneficence, restrained from justifying her fame by her own high sense of duty to her guilty mother and dissipated sister, too independent in her character to solicit from others that pecuniary assistance which, from the circumstances of her birth, she believed she had justly lost, she prayed and suffered for three and twenty years, alternately accused as an abominable branch whom society had justly cast out, as an avaricious worldling, who refused to distribute the hoards her mother had accumulated, and as a capricious, fretful being, whose only affliction was a wretched temper, fostered in moody solitude, till it became utterly irreconcilable with the habits of the world.

"No particular malevolence gave birth to these censures. Sorrow had not warped the natural gentleness of her temper; and though her limited circumstances restrained her bounty, her heart overflowed with goodwill for every living creature, and the few comforts which she enjoyed resulted from her endeavours to make others happy. Yet, thus it is that the world often treats a character of Selina's stamp, not from enmity, but garrulity. We have, generally speaking, a strong dislike to being kept in the dark, and whenever there is something mysterious in the conduct of our neighbours, we are apt uncharitably to conclude, that it arises from a disgraceful cause. Hence the success of specious characters; hence the general failure of timidity and unobtrusive worth. Lady Selina lived in what is called a sociable neighbourhood, among the rich and prosperous, with whose habits hers did not accord, and to whose festivities she could contribute no additional zest, except that of stating that they visited a right honourable. Most of them had sailed down the stream of life so smoothly as never to have experienced personal affliction, and as they possessed the philosophical quality (so often called goodnature) of bearing the sorrows of their friends and connexions with easy indifference, nothing

but the severe visitings of bodily disease, or the failure of the bank, could have convinced them that 'man is made to mourn.' People thus circumstanced, who never voluntarily visit the house of sorrow as a preparatory school for themselves, are firmly persuaded, that every body may, if they please, be happy, and they entertain the same antipathy to the countenance of melancholy, though illuminated by the seraphick smile of resignation, as Cesar did to the lean and wrinkled Cassius; for with them unhappy people labour under a threefold ban: they do not contribute to their pleasures; they are apt to ask favours; and they remind them that prosperity is of temporary duration.

"In assigning these reasons for lady Selina's being unpopular, I wish to serve many worthy people, who, to the anguish of untold grief, find the vexation of undeserved opprobrium unexpectedly superinduced; and I would caution those who pique themselves on their penetration, to be less active in supplying the hiatus which prudence or modesty leaves unfilled. In so doing they often launch into the boundless sea of conjecture, and with no worse motive than a desire to show their own talents, shape the mist-enveloped character into a demon or a fury. And yet, perhaps, among the cares which haunt the sleepless couches of those possessed by that species of sorrow which is compelled to hide its festering wounds (and how often does delicate sorrow take that shape) none is more tormenting than the consciousness, that though concealment is their duty, reproach uses it as a covert from whence she may shoot those barbed arrows, which most severely wound a susceptible, ingenuous mind." P. 257.

The following reflections on an event in the history, are also important. They are occasioned by the narrative of a guilty person, written under extreme despondency.

"A narrative penned in such circumstances, by a hand convulsed with pain, and trembling with the prelusive horrors of meditated suicide, obliterated in many parts by tears which had flowed from eyes long since closed in death, and breathing the proud yet deep remorse of an afflicted, rather than a contrite spirit, now removed to that world where adulation cannot soothe, nor rank protect, must

surely have checked the career of the most abandoned libertine, and taught him to consider the ultimate end of criminal artifices and desires. Still more must he have been awed into the subjugation of his passions, by reflecting on the subsequent miseries entailed on virtuous and highly deserving lovers. Who shall set bounds to the overflowings of ungodliness, or predict where the evils occasioned by one wicked deed will terminate? If the innocent offspring are not, as in this instance, the victims, the influence of a bad example is incalculable. It misleads inexperience; it corrupts simplicity; folly flies to it as an excuse; and it hardens frailty into depravity. How carefully should the powerful and the eminent consider their ways, especially at this period, when the sword of divine punishment is apparently suspended over our menaced country! And how strictly does it behove every private individual to act the part of the real patriot, by guarding his conduct with such religious and moral vigilance as not to add to the burden of national sin, the only invincible enemy of England. Surely, it augurs ill respecting the state of publick virtue, to see so little of that grave abhorrence of vice in the abstract, which, without infringing the claims of candour and charity to particular offenders, marks the pure morals of a high-minded people. We may laugh at folly, we may ridicule slight deviations from rectitude; but, by what strange perversion of our faculties does the most direct breach of the holy laws of God, the most determined contempt of every solemn tie, abandoned profligacy, avowed prostitution, or shameless effrontery, excite mirth instead of chilling the reflecting mind with horror?" p. 311.

Many other passages of powerful impression in their places, we are precluded from extracting, by their intimate connexion with the story of the novel, which we purposely forbear to anticipate; and we conclude our sketch of the book by assuring our readers that, to our feelings, what it contains for amusement is good, but what it intimates or expresses for instruction, is admirable. The tone of religious and moral feeling would soon be raised among us, if such works alone were produced in this class of composition.

SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

MEMOIR OF HIS EXCELLENCY MIRZA AL ABOO HASSAN,
ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY FROM THE KING OF PERSIA TO THE COURT
OF GREAT BRITAIN.

[With a Portrait.] *see p 289*

HIS excellency MIRZA ABOO AL HASSAN, who was chosen by the Persian monarch, Fatha ali Shah, to represent his majesty at the court of Great Britain, and to negotiate matters of the highest importance, is a native of Shirauz, a city which for many ages was the capital of Persia, and is still one of the most considerable in Asia. Previous to his receiving this very honourable diplomatick appointment, Mirza Aboo al Hassan held the government of Khoozistan, a southern province of the Persian empire, and the Susiana of our ancient writers. His excellency has, on various occasions, travelled in Hindoostan and Arabia; performed his devotions at Mecca; and in the course of his journey from Tehiran (the present capital of the kingdom of Persia, situated near the Caspian Sea) he passed through Georgia, Armenia, and Antolia, to Constantinople. From this city his excellency was conveyed in a British frigate to the island of Malta, where he embarked, with nine Persian attendants, on board the Formidable man of war, of ninety guns, touched at Gibraltar, and landed in England in December last.

On his arrival in London, every attention was paid by his majesty's

ministers to the Persian envoy. Sir Gore Ouseley, bart. (who has since been appointed ambassadour at the court of Tehiran) was instructed to attend his excellency as mehmander (an officer of distinction, whose duty is to receive and entertain foreign princes and other illustrious personages) and the Mirza frequently expresses the satisfaction he has enjoyed from the kindness, the hospitality, and the honours which he has experienced in this country. His excellency has not availed himself of the Mussulman privilege which allows a plurality of wives. Although no man is more sensible of beauty's power (as his admiration of our English ladies sufficiently evinces) he has (we understand from good authority) but one wife, and by her but one child. The progress which he has made both in speaking and writing English, within a few months, surprises all those who have the honour of his acquaintance: and we are assured, that he also converses freely in the Turkish and Hindoostanee languages. He is now in his thirty-fourth year; in person tall and athletick, with a fine countenance, expressive eyes, beautiful teeth, and a copious beard of the deepest sable.

FROM THE EUROPEAN MAGAZINE.

A GENUINE LETTER,

FROM THE PERSIAN ENVOY, MIRZA ABUL HASSAN,

To the Lord, or Gentleman, without name, who lately write Letter to him, and ask very much to give Answer.

SIR, MY LORD,

WHEN you write to me, some time ago, to give my thought of what I see good and bad this country, that time I not speak English very well—now I read, I write much little better—now I give to you my think. In this country bad not too much, every thing very good—but suppose I not tell something little bad, then you say I tell all flattery—therefore I tell most bad thing.—I not like such crowd in evening party every night—In cold weather not very good—now, hot weather, much too bad.—I very much astonish, every day now much hot than before, evening parties much crowd than before.—Pretty beautiful Ladies come sweat that not very good—I always afraid some old Lady in great crowd come dead, that not very good, and spoil my happiness.—I think old Ladies after 85 years not come to evening party that much better.—Why for take so much trouble? Some other thing little bad.—Very beautiful young Lady, she got ugly fellow for husband, that not very good, very shocking.—I ask Sir Gore why for this. He says me, perhaps he very good man, not handsome no matter, perhaps got too much money, perhaps got title—I say I not like that, all very shocking.—This all bad I know—now I say good.—English People all very good people—all very happy—do what they like, say what like, write in Newspapers what like. I love English people very much, they very good, very civil to me.—I tell my King English love Persian very much.—English King best man in world—he love his people very good much.—He speak very kind to me, I love him very much.—Queen very best woman I ever saw.—Prince of Wales such a fine elegant beautiful

man—I not understand English enough proper to praise him—he is too great for my language—I respect him same as my own King—I love him very much—his manner all the same as talisman and charm.—All the Princes very fine men, very handsome men, very sweet words, very affable.—I like all too much.—I think the Ladies and Gentlemen this country, most high rank, high honour, very rich (except two or three) most good, very kind to inferior peoples.—This very good.—I go to see Chelsea—all old men sit on grass, in shade of fine tree, fine river run by—beautiful place, plenty to eat, drink, good coat, every thing very good—Sir Gore he tell me King Charles and King James.—I say, Sir Gore, they not Mussulmans, but I think God love them very much. I think God he love the King very well for keeping up that charity—then I see one small regiment of children go to dinner—one small boy he say thanks to God for eat, for drink, for clothes—other little boys they all answer Amen, then I cry a little—my heart too much pleased.—This all very good for two things—one thing God very much please—two things soldiers fight much better because see their good king take care of old wounded fathers and little children.—Then I go to Greenwich—that too good place—such a fine sight make me a little sick for joy—all old men so happy, eat dinner so well—fine house—fine beds—all very good.—This very good country—English ladies very handsome, very beautiful—I travel great deal: I go Arabia, I go Calcutta, Hyderabad, Poonah, Bombay, Georgia, Armenia, Constantinople, Malta, Gibraltar, I see best Georgian, Circassian, Turkish, Greek ladies, but

nothing not so beautiful as English ladies—all very clever—speak French, speak English, speak Italian, play musick very well, sing very good—very glad for me if Persian ladies like them; but English ladies speak such sweet words, I think tell a little story, that not very good. One thing more I see, but I not understand that thing good or bad; last Thursday I see some fine carriages, fine horses, thousand people go to look that carriages; I ask why for, they say me, that gentle-

men on boxes, they drive their own carriage. I say, why for take so much trouble. They say me, he drive very well, that very good thing. It rain very hard, some lord, some gentlemen, he get very wet; I say, why he not go inside. They tell me good coachman not mind, get wet every day, will be much ashamed if go inside, that I not understand.

Sir, my Lord—

Good night—

ABUL HASSAN.

9, Mansfield street, May 19, 1810.

MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE OF PRINCE EUGENE OF SAVOY.

Written by Himself.

[The following particulars respecting one of the most distinguished military characters of the 17th and 18th centuries, are extracted from a work printed last year at Weimar, from a manuscript partly dictated by the prince, and partly in his own handwriting. It is written in French; the events of each year are separately detailed; and the work forms an octavo volume of near 200 pages. As the sentiments of this great man respecting English affairs in general, and his account of the campaigns which he made in conjunction with the illustrious Marlborough, and other English officers, must be the most interesting to the British reader; it is to this part of his memoirs that particular attention will be paid in these extracts.]

[*Monthly Mag.*

THE prince having entered in 1683, at the age of 20, into the service of the emperor Leopold I. commenced his military career at the celebrated siege of Vienna. Before the expiration of that year he was appointed colonel of a regiment of dragoons; at twenty-one he was promoted to the rank of major-general; at twenty-five to that of lieutenant-general; and, before he had been ten years in the service, he became a field-marshal. For this rapid advancement he was indebted only to his extraordinary talents and success.

Passing over his early campaigns

against the Turks, and against the French in Italy, where he was opposed to the celebrated Catinat, we shall commence with the events of the year 1697; when he was at the head of the imperial army, acting against the former power.

1697.—The Turks are never in a hurry. The grand signor, Kara Mustapha himself, did me the honour to arrive at Sophia with his army, in the month of July. I collected mine at Veris Marton; I called in Vaudemont and Rabutin, as it appeared to me to be the grand signor's design to make himself master of Titul, that he might be able to lay siege to Peterwaradin. I encamped on the 26th of August at Zenta. General Nelim was attacked. I arrived too late to his assistance, but nevertheless praised him, for he could not have held out any longer, overwhelmed as he was by numbers.—God be thanked, I never complained of any one, neither did I ever throw upon another the blame of a fault or misfortune. Titul was burned. The grand vizir remained on this side of the Danube, which it was necessary for the grand signor to cross before he could lay siege to Peterwaradin; but marching along the bank of the river, and concealing

my intention by my skirmishes with the spahis, I got before him, passed the bridge, and thus saved the place. This march, I must own, was well conducted, and equivalent to a victory. I intrenched myself with great despatch, and the enemy durst not attack me. Among some prisoners that we took, there happened to be a pacha, whom I questioned in vain respecting the designs of Kara Mustapha; but four hussars, with drawn sabres, ready to cut him in pieces, extorted the confession that the enemy at first intended to make an attempt on Segedin; but that the grand signor, having afterwards changed his mind, had already begun to cross the Teisse; and that great part of the army under the command of the grand vizir was still in good intrenchments near Zenta. I was marching to attack them, when a cursed courier brought me an order from the emperor, not to give battle under any circumstances whatever.

I had already advanced too far.—By stopping where I was, I should have lost part of my army, and my honour. I put the letter in my pocket, and, at the head of six regiments of dragoons, approached so near to the Turks, as to perceive that they were all preparing to pass the Teisse. I rejoined my army with a look of satisfaction, which, I was told, was considered a good omen by the soldiers. I began the engagement by charging myself two thousand spahis, whom I forced to return to their intrenchments. A hundred pieces of cannon annoyed me greatly. I sent orders to Rabutin to advance his left wing so as to form a curve towards the right: and to Stahrenberg, who commanded the right, to do the same towards the left, with a view to take in the whole intrenchment by a semicircle. This I could not have ventured to do before Catinat, who would have interrupted me in so slow and so complicated a movement. The Turks, however,

gave me no molestation. They attacked my left wing too late; but yet they would have used it roughly, had it not been for four battalions of the second line, and the artillery, which I sent very opportunely to repel their cavalry, and make a breach in the intrenchments. It was six in the evening. The Turks, assaulted, and their intrenchments forced in all points, hurried in crowds to the bridge and choked it up, so that they were obliged to throw themselves into the Teisse, where those who escaped drowning were killed. On every side was heard the cry of *aman! aman!* which signifies *quarter!* At ten, the slaughter still continued. I could take no more than 4,000 prisoners, for 20,000 were left dead on the field, and 10,000 were drowned. I did not lose a thousand men. Those alone who first betook themselves to flight at the commencement of the battle, rejoined the corps which had remained on the opposite side of the river. It was the 11th of September. I sent Vaudemont with the account of this affair to Vienna. I then went and took two forts and two castles in Bosnia, burned Seraglio, and returned to Hungary into winter quarters.

I set out for Vienna, where I expected to be received a hundred times better than I had ever yet been. Leopold gave me the coldest of audiences; more dry than ever; he listened to me without saying a word. I instantly perceived that somebody or other had been at work during my absence, and that while I was ridding myself of the Turks, some good Christians at Vienna had been trying to get rid of me. I went away from the audience with a feeling of indignation, which grew still stronger when Schlick, in great consternation, came and demanded my sword. I delivered it into his trembling hand with a look of the profoundest disdain, which served to increase his dismay. It was reported

that I said: "Take it, yet reeking with the blood of enemies; I have no wish to resume it, except for the benefit of his majesty's service." One half of this sentence would be a gasconade, and the other a mean resignation. My rage was silent. I was put under arrest in my hotel. Here I was soon informed that Gaspar Kinsky, and some others, wished me to be brought to trial for disobedience and rashness, and that I was to be tried by a court-martial, by which I should probably be sentenced to die. This report was soon circulated through the whole city. The people assembled about my house. Deputies from the body of citizens offered to guard me and to prevent my being taken away, in case of any attempt to put the above-mentioned design in execution. I entreated them not to violate their duty as loyal subjects, nor to disturb the publick tranquillity. I thanked them for their zeal, by which I was moved even to tears. The city of Vienna is small. This assemblage of the people was known at court in a few minutes. Either from fear or repentance, the emperour sent me my sword, with the request that I would still continue to command his army in Hungary. I replied that I would, on condition that I should have a *carte blanche*, and be no longer exposed to the malice of his generals and ministers. The poor emperour durst not publicly give me these full powers, though he did privately, in a note signed with his own hand; and with this I thought proper to be content.

This anecdote of Leopold, whom I pity for not having felt that a more signal reparation was due to me, fully demonstrates the falsehood of a saying, which has been ascribed to me: that, of the three emperours whom I have served, the first was my father, the second my brother, and the third my master. A pretty sort of a father truly, to cause me to lose my head for having saved his empire!

1699.—This year I began my fine library, and conceived a taste for gardens and palaces.

I purchased, from time to time, some beautiful paintings and drawings that were not known. I was not rich enough to form a gallery, and was not fond of engravings, because other persons may possess the same. I never liked copies of any kind, and those talents which run away with valuable time. A few wind instruments, martial airs, hunting-tunes, flourishes of trumpets, or pleasing airs of the comick opera, relieved me, during dinner, from the necessity of speaking or listening to tiresome persons.

1700.—After the peace of Carlowitz, France was so polite as to send us M. Villars as her ambassador. He was received with great distinction by all those with whom he had been acquainted in Hungary, where he had gained great reputation as a volunteer, and by the whole city, who thought him extremely amiable. But intrigues were carried on at his court against ours, without his knowledge. He was highly astonished at the coldness with which he was all at once treated. Notwithstanding the friendship of the king of the Romans for me, I could not prevail upon him to relax in this respect. "Of what use," said I to him, and to the courtiers and generals who followed his example, "is this personal antipathy, which M. Villars does not deserve? I shall see him, and continue on friendly terms with him, till we begin to fire upon one another again." Prince Louis, of Baden, acted in the same manner, though we were not the better liked for it. We all three parted very good friends. We missed his company much; for when Louis XIV. had, at length, completed all his machinations, and thrown off the mask, he departed. Previous to this we had the following conversation: "It is not my fault," said he, "if, without knowing how to suppress your rebellion in Hungary, you are

determined to make war upon us. I had rather your highness would do like those gentlemen who have turned their backs upon me here, as they will do elsewhere, if I command an army." This was truly an expression *à la Villars*. "You hope that the Turks will interfere, because the abbé Joachim has predicted that the empress would be delivered of twins, one of whom should sit on the throne of Constantinople." "I am not angry with you, M. de Villars," replied I, "for in your correspondence, which, to be sure, is somewhat tinged with levity, after the manner of your nation, you have transmitted to your court a portrait of me drawn by the hand of friendship. Others complain of certain inadvertencies, and the court of having read in one of your despatches: 'We shall see if the Christ in Leopold's chapel will speak to him as he did to Ferdinand II.' Private individuals never forgive a satire: judge then of the effect which a severe thing, said against a sovereign, must produce upon him." "It is only by great reserve in conversation," said he, "that I have supported myself in this country. I am angry with your Austrians, who, among the tales which they invent concerning me, assert that I conspired with Ragotzi against the person of the emperor." "I can tell you," answered I, "what gave rise to this stupid idea. People recollected an expression in a letter intercepted while you were a volunteer in our service: 'I am an Austrian with the army, but a Frenchman at Vienna.' This means a great deal, said the fools. No conspiracies have ever been formed against our emperors; they have never been assassinated. We have no Clements or Ravallacs. The people are not enthusiasts, as with you, but for

that very reason, they do not pass from one sentiment to another.—Crimes, indeed, are very rare in Austria. Last year some persons wanted to persuade Leopold that a design had been formed to kill him because a ball went through his hat while hunting. "Seek the man, said he, with his Spanish air; he is awkward one way or other; he is dying of fear or of hunger; give him a thousand ducats."

1704. The only time to tell Leopold plain truths was when he was frightened. Where is the mistress or friend to whom they can be told with impunity! and much less a great sovereign, spoiled by slaves who accompany him every day to church, but not his generals to war. In urgent cases, I requested an extraordinary audience of him, as if I had been the ambassador of a foreign power,* and this occurred but very seldom.

What I obtained was the power of negotiating quite alone, and I gained over to our side queen Anne and Marlborough. I went to meet him at Heilbronn, to concert measures with him and prince Louis of Baden, whom I had not seen for a considerable time. I took upon myself the defence of the lines of Behel; and left them to follow Tallard, who was endeavouring to join the elector of Bavaria. If I am not fortunate enough to prevent their junction, thought I, the worst that can befall me is to fight both together, which will save me the trouble of engaging them separately. Tallard and Marsin had two other sorts of presumption than Villeroy, and more wit. The presumption of the one was founded "*sur sa Spire*,"† that of the other on the divine protection, which, by the cabals of the pious, had certainly proved as beneficial

* The prince had been the preceding year appointed president of war.

† The translator has here inserted the words of the original, which he frankly acknowledges he does not understand.

to him as the patronage of the court. Tallard was as short-sighted morally as he was physically. Marsin was more clear-sighted, possessed more talents, but, luckily, no prudence.

Had they exercised patience, without fighting me, they would have obliged me to abandon Bavaria, for I had no place in that country where I could form my magazines, except Nordlingen; but these gentlemen were in a great hurry, and the elector was furious at the plunder which I had suffered Marlborough to make, and who, in consequence, became my firm friend. We sincerely loved and esteemed each other. He was, indeed, a great statesman and warrior.

They had eighty thousand men, and so had we. Why did the French separate from the Bavarians? Why did they encamp so far from the rivulet which would have embarrassed us in the attack? Why did they place twenty seven battalions and twelve squadrons in Blenheim? Why did they scatter so many troops in other villages? Marlborough was more fortunate than I in his passage of the rivulet, and his fine attack. A little ascent occasioned my being half an hour later. My infantry behaved very well, but my cavalry very ill. I had a horse killed under me. Marlborough was checked, but not repulsed. I succeeded in rallying the regiments, which were shy at first, and led them four times to the charge. Marlborough, with his infantry and artillery, and sometimes with his cavalry, cleared away that of the enemy, and took Blenheim. We were beaten for a moment by the *gendarmes*; but at length we threw them into the Danube. I was under the greatest obligations to Marlborough for his changes of disposition according to circumstances. A Bavarian dragoon took aim at me. One of my Danes fortunately anticipated him. We lost 9,000 men; but 12,800 French killed, and 20,800 taken prisoners, prevented them, this

time, from singing their usual *Te Deum* for their defeats, which they never acknowledge.

The poor elector, with his corps, joined Villeroy, who had marched to favour his retreat. They mournfully embraced. "I have sacrificed my dominions for the king," said the first, "and I am ready to sacrifice my life for him." The duke and prince (for Marlborough was now created a prince of the empire) Louis of Baden, and I, went to amuse ourselves at Stuttgart. The second took Landau, the first Trarbach, while I narrowly missed the two Brisachs: the one because the governor of Fribourg mistook his way, and the other from the false delicacy of the lieutenant colonel, whom I had directed to enter as a courier with the others, and who being unable to endure a caning from an overseer of the works of the place, ordered him to be fired upon. This was, indeed, insisting very unseasonably on a point of honour, and the only occasion on which a man might, without disgrace, receive a thrashing. Had we succeeded, he would rather have been envied than reproached for it. I proceeded to Ingolstadt, which was on the point of surrendering, but was prevented by the valour of a French regiment, composed of brave deserters in the Bavarian service. They disregarded alike my promises and my threats: but astonishing them by the generous offer of sending them home under an escort, that nothing might happen to them, they evacuated Ingolstadt; and with the exception of Munich, all Bavaria was ours, thanks to the treaty which I concluded with the electress. The conditions were hard: she refused them: but by means of father Schuhmacher, a good Jesuit, her confessor, I prevailed on her to sign them, and set out for Vienna.

1708—On the 31st of March I was at Dresden, and obtained a promise of king Augustus to send me a

body of his troops. I then went to Hanover, and received the same promise from the elector. I proceeded to the Hague, where with all my heart I embraced Marlborough, who had come thither on the same business. We both pressed Heinsius and Fagel for assistance; assuring them, that to prevent the enemy from laying siege to the strong places, we would gain a battle as speedily as possible. I appeased, as well as I could, those gentlemen, who were dissatisfied, because the emperor had not made peace with the Hungarian rebels, nor appropriated to his own use the revenues of Naples, the Milanese, and Bavaria. I went next to Dusseldorf, to pacify the elector Palatine, who was likewise angry with the emperor Joseph I. respecting the Upper Pallatinate. I returned to Hanover with Marlborough, to press the elector; went to Leipsick to urge king Augustus, whom I found there, once more; and after proceeding to Vienna to give an account of my successful negotiations, I was immediately sent off again to Frankfurt, to confer with the electors of Mentz and Hanover, and Rechteren, the Dutch minister. I circulated a report that this journey was undertaken for the sake of my health, and that the physicians had ordered me to use the waters of Schlangenbad. I said to all these petty allies: "It is your interest; a great emperor would live at your expense, if you did not exist, and would perhaps be better off on that account. If you do not protect yourselves by defending him, beware lest another Louvois lay waste the empire with fire and sword."

I have always taken for the foundation of my politicks, the interest of the persons with whom I had to do, and have detested court flatterers, who say: "These princes are personally attached to your majesty." It is thus they strengthen the self-love of sovereigns, who, besides, like to be told, "every thing is go-

ing on well, in the best manner, or is likely to be retrieved."

Villars was not duped by the prescriptions of the faculty for the cure of diseases with which I was not afflicted. He wrote to a prisoner whom he sent back to me: "If you belong to the army which prince Eugene is going to command, assure him of my respect. I understand that he is going to the baths on the 20th of June; but if I recollect right, he was not formerly so attentive to his health. We shall soon see what sort of baths he means to take." I assembled my army of Austrians and German allies at Coblenz, where I had a long conference with the elector of Treves. The French had one hundred thousand men in the low countries. Marlborough had but sixty thousand. I received orders to march to his support. I directed my troops to proceed by forced marches, while I went post myself, fearful lest a battle should be fought without me. Cadogan came to compliment me to Maestricht. He told me that the French had surprised Ghent, Bruges, and Plaskendall, and that my presence was wanted. I passed through Brussels, where my interview with my mother, after a separation of twenty five years, was very affecting, but very short; and found Marlborough in camp at Asch, between Brussels and Alost; and learning that the enemy had their left on the other side of the Dendre, I asked Marlborough, on my arrival, "if it was not his intention to give battle." "I think I ought," replied he immediately, "and I find with pleasure, but without astonishment, that we have both made the reflection, that without this, our communication with Brussels would be cut off: but I would have waited for your troops." "I would not advise you to wait," replied I, "for the French would have time to retreat."

Vendome wanted to dispute the passage of the Dendre. He told the

duke of Burgundy, that evil advisers persuaded him to march to Ghent. "When you perceive in prince Eugene a desire to avoid an engagement, he knows how to force you to one." This expression I saw in the vindication of his conduct, which he printed on his return to Paris.

Cadogan went to Oudenarde, and in a few hours threw a bridge across the Scheldt. "It is still time," said Vendome to the duke of Burgundy, "to discontinue your march, and to attack, with the troops which we have here, that part of the allied army which has passed the river." The latter hesitated, lost time, would have turned back, sent twenty squadrons to dispute the passage, recalled them, and said: "Let us march to Ghent." "It is too late," said Vendome, "you cannot now; in half an hour, perhaps, you will have the enemy upon you." "Why then did you stop me?" rejoined the duke of Burgundy. "To begin the attack immediately," replied he, "Cadogan yonder, is already master of the village of Hurne, and of six battalions. Let us form at least in the best manner we can." Rantzau commenced the attack. He overthrew a column of cavalry, and would have been routed in his turn, had it not been for the electoral prince of Hanover,* who had his horse killed under him. Grimaldi too soon, and injudiciously, ordered a charge. "What are you doing?" cried Vendome, coming up at full gallop, "you are wrong." "It is by the duke of Burgundy's orders," replied he. The latter, vexed at being contradicted, thought only how to cross the other. Vendome was giving orders to charge the left. "What are you doing?" said the duke of Burgundy. "I forbid it; there is an impassable ravine and morass." Let any one judge of the indignation of Vendome, who had passed over the spot but a moment

before. Had it not been for this misunderstanding, we should, perhaps, have been defeated; for our cavalry was engaged a full half hour before the infantry could join it. For the same reason, I directed the village of Hurne to be abandoned, that I might send the battalions by which it was occupied, to support the squadrons on the left wing. But the duke of Argyle arrived with all possible expedition, at the head of the English infantry; and then came the Dutch, though much more slowly. "Now," said I to Marlborough, "we are in a condition to fight."—It was six in the evening of the 11th of July; we had yet three hours of day-light. I was on the right at the head of the Prussians. Some battalions turned their backs after having been attacked with unequalled fury. They rallied, retrieved their fault, and we recovered the ground they had lost. The battle then became general along the whole line. The spectacle was magnificent. It was one sheet of fire. That of our artillery made a powerful impression; that of the French, being very injudiciously posted, in consequence of the uncertainty which prevailed in the army on account of the disunion of its commanders, produced very little effect. With us it was quite the contrary. We loved and esteemed one another, not excepting the Dutch marshal Ouverkerke, venerable for his age and services, my old friend and Marlborough's, who obeyed and fought to admiration.

The following circumstance may serve to prove our harmony. Matters were going wrong on the right, where I commanded. Marlborough, who perceived it, sent me a reinforcement of eighteen battalions, without which, I should scarcely have been able to keep my ground. I then advanced, and drove in the first line; but at the head of the se-

* Afterwards George II.

cond, I found Vendome on foot, with a pike in his hand, encouraging the troops. He made so vigorous a resistance, that I should not have accomplished my purpose, had it not been for Natzmer, at the head of the king of Prussia's *gendarmes*, who broke through the line, and enabled me to obtain complete success.

Marlborough purchased his more dearly on the right, where he attacked in front, while Ouvekerke dislodged the enemy from the hedges and villages. Nassau, Fries, and Oxenstiern, drove the infantry beyond the defiles, but they were roughly handled by the king's household troops, who came to its assistance. I rendered the same service to the duke. I sent Tilly, who making a considerable circuit, took the brave household troops, which had nearly snatched the victory from us, in the rear: but this decided the business. The darkness of the night prevented our pursuit, and enabled me to execute a scheme for increasing the number of our prisoners.—I sent out drummers in different directions, with orders to beat the retreat, after the French manner, and posted my French refugee officers, with directions to shout on all sides: *A moi Picardie ! A moi Champagne ! A moi Piemont !* The French soldiers ran to these posts, and I picked up a pretty round number.

We took in all about seven thousand. The duke of Burgundy, and his evil counsellors, had long before withdrawn. Vendome collected the relics of the army, and took charge of the rear.

As the firing had recommenced while it was still dark, Marlborough waited for daylight to attack the enemy before he reached Ghent.—His detachment found him but too soon. Vendome had posted his grenadiers to the right and left of the high road, and they put our cavalry, which pursued them, to the rout. Vendome, by this, saved the remnant of his army, which entered Ghent in the utmost confusion, with the dukes of Burgundy and Berry, and the count of Toulouse. His presence pacified and cheered the soldiers.

They all held a council of war at the inn called the Golden Apple.—The opinion of the princes and their courtiers was, as usual, detestable.—Vendome grew warm, expressed his indignation at having been crossed by them, and declared, that as he was determined not to be served in the same manner again, he should order the army to encamp behind the canal from Bruges to Lovendeghem. I pitied him from the bottom of my heart, as I had done the elector of Bavaria in 1704, and the duke of Orleans in 1706.

ON THE VOLCANOS OF JORULLO. BY ALEXANDER HUMBOLDT.*

THE grand catastrophe in which this volcanick mountain issued from the earth, and by which the face of a considerable extent of ground was totally altered, was, perhaps, one of the most extensive physical changes, that the history of our globe exhibits. Geology points out spots in the ocean, where, within the last

two thousand years, volcanick islets have arisen above the surface of the sea, as near as the Azores, in the Archipelago, and on the south of Iceland: but it records no instance of a mountain of scorixæ and ashes, 517 met. [563 yards] above the old level of the neighbouring plains, suddenly formed in the centre of a

* Extracted from his Essay on New Spain. *Journal de Physique*, vol. LXIX. p. 149.

thousand small burning cones, thirty six leagues from the seashore, and forty two leagues from any other volcano. This phenomenon remained unknown to the mineralogists and natural philosophers of Europe, though it took place but fifty years ago, and within six days journey of the capital of Mexico.

Descending from the central flat towards the coasts of the Pacifick ocean, a vast plain extends from the hills of Aguasarco to the villages of Toipa, and Patatlan, equally celebrated for their fine cotton plantations. Between the picachos del Mortero and the cerras de las Cuevas and de Cuiche, this plain is only from 750 to 800 met. [820 to 880 yards] above the level of the sea. Basaltick hills rise in the midst of a country, in which porphyry with base of greenstone predominates. Their summits are crowned with oaks always in verdure, and the foliage of laurels and olives intermingled with dwarf fan palms. This beautiful vegetation forms a singular contrast with the arid plain, which has been laid waste by volcanick fire.

To the middle of the eighteenth century, fields of sugar canes and indigo extended between two rivulets, called Cuitimba and San Pedro. They were skirted by basaltick mountains, the structure of which seems to indicate, that all the country, in remote periods, has several times experienced the violent action of volcanos. These fields, irrigated by art, belonged to the estate of San Pedro de Jorullo (Xorullo, or Juvriso) one of the largest and most valuable in the country. In the month of June, 1759, fearful rumbling noises were accompanied with frequent shocks of an earthquake, which succeeded each other at intervals for fifty or sixty days, and threw the inhabitants of the estate into the greatest consternation. From the beginning of the month of September, every thing seemed perfectly

quiet, when, in the night of the 28th of that month, a terrible subterranean noise was heard anew. The frightened Indians fled to the mountains of Aguasarco. A space of three or four square miles, known by the name of Malpays, rose in the shape of a bladder. The boundaries of this rising are still distinguishable in the ruptured strata. The Malpays towards the edge is only 12 met. [13 yards] above the former level of the plain, called las playas de Jorullo; but the convexity of the ground increases progressively toward the centre, till it reaches the height of 160 met. [175 yards.]

They who witnessed this grand catastrophe from the top of Aguasarco assert, that they saw flames issue out of the ground for the space of more than half a league square; that fragments of redhot rocks were thrown to a prodigious height; and that through a thick cloud of ashes, illumined by the volcanick fire, and resembling a stormy sea, the softened crust of the earth was seen to swell up. The rivers of Cuitimba and San Pedro then precipitated themselves in the burning crevices. The decomposition of the water contributed to reanimate the flames, which were perceptible at the city of Pascuoro, though standing on a very wide plain 1400 met. [1530 yards] above the level of the playas de Jorullo. Eruptions of mud, particularly of the strata of clay, including decomposed nodules of basalt with concentrick layers, seem to prove, that subterranean waters had no small part in this extraordinary revolution. Thousands of small cones, only two or three yards high, which the Indians call evens, issued from the raised dome of the Malpays. Though the heat of these volcanick ovens has diminished greatly within these fifteen years, according to the testimony of the Indians, I found the thermometer rise to 95° [if centig. 203° F.] in the crevices that emitted an aqueous vapour. Each

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little cone is a chimney, from which a thick smoke rises to the height of ten or fifteen met. [11 or 16 yards.] In several, a subterranean noise is heard like that of some fluid boiling at no great depth.

Amid these ovens, in a fissure, the direction of which is from N. N. E. to S. S. W. six large hummocks rise 400 or 500 met. [440 or 550 yards] above the old level of the plain. This is the phenomenon of Monte Novo at Naples repeated several times in a row of volcanick hills. The loftiest of these huge hummocks, which reminded me of the country of Auvergne, is the large volcano of Jorullo. It is constantly burning, and has thrown out, on the north side, an immense quantity of scorified and basaltick lava, including fragments of primitive rocks. These grand eruptions of the central volcano continued till February, 1760. In the succeeding years they became gradually less frequent. The Indians, alarmed by the horrible noise of the new volcano, at first deserted the villages for seven or eight leagues round the plain of Jorullo. In a few months they became familiar with the alarming sight, returned to their huts, and went down to the mountains of Aguasarco and Santa Ines, to admire the sheaves of fire thrown out by an infinite number of large and small volcanick openings. The ashes then covered the houses of Queretoro, more than 48 leagues [120 miles] in a right line from the place of the explosion. Though the subterranean fire appears to be in no great activity* at present, and the Malpays and the great volcano begin to be covered with vegetables, we found the air so heated by the little ovens, that in the shade, and

at a considerable distance from the ground, the thermometer rose to 43° [109.4° F.] This fact evinces, that there is no exaggeration in the report of some of the old Indians, who say, that the plains of Jorullo were uninhabitable for several years, and even to a considerable distance from the ground raised up, on account of the excessive heat.

Near the cerro of Santa Ines the traveller is still shown the rivers of Cuitimba and San Pedro, the limpid waters of which formerly refreshed the sugar canes on the estate of Don Andrew Pimantel. These springs were lost in the night of the 29th of September, 1759: but 2000 met. [near 2200 yards] to the westward, in the soil that has been elevated, two rivulets are seen to break out of the clayey dome of the furnaces, exhibiting themselves as therinal waters, in which the thermometer rises to 52.7° [126.86° F.] The Indians still give these the names of San Pedro and Cuitimba, because in several parts of the Malpays large bodies of water are supposed to be heard running from east to west, from the mountains of Santa Ines to the estate of the Presentation. Near this estate is a brook, that emits sulphuretted hydrogen gas. It is more than 7 met. [near 8 yards] wide, and is the most copious hydrosulphurous spring I ever saw.

In the opinion of the natives, these extraordinary changes I have described, the crust of earth raised and cracked by volcanick fire, the mountains of scorix and ashes heaped up, are the works of monks; the greatest, no doubt, they ever produced in either hemisphere. Our Indian host, at the hut we inhabited in the plain of Jorullo, told us, that some missionary capuchins preached at the

* In the bottom of the crater we found the heat of the air 47° [116.6° F.] and in some places 58° and 60° [136.4° and 140° .] We had to pass over cracks exhaling sulphurous vapours, in which the thermometer rose to 85° [185° .] From these cracks, and the heaps of scorix that cover considerable hollows, the descent into the crater is not without danger.

estate of San Pedro, and, not meeting a favourable reception, uttered the most horrible and complicated imprecations against this plain, then so beautiful and fertile. They prophesied, that the estate should first be swallowed up by flames issuing out of the bowels of the earth; and that the air should afterward be cooled to such a degree, that the neighbouring mountains should remain for ever covered with ice and snow. The first of these maledictions having been so fatally verified, the common people foresee, in the gradual cooling of the volcano, the pre-sage of a perpetual winter. I have thought it right to mention this vulgar tradition, worthy a place in the epic poem of the jesuit Landivar, because it exhibits a striking feature of the manners and prejudices of these remote countries. It shows the active industry of a class of men, who, too frequently abusing the credulity of the people, and pretending to possess the power of suspending the immutable laws of nature, know how to avail themselves of every event for establishing their empire by the fear of physical evil.

The situation of the new volcano of Jorullo leads to a very curious geological observation. It has already been observed in the 3d chapter, that there is, in New Spain, a line of great heights, or a narrow zone included between the latitudes of $18^{\circ} 59'$ and $19^{\circ} 12'$, in which are all the summits of Anahuack that rise above the region of perpetual snow. These summits are either volcanos still actually burning; or mountains, the form of which, as well as the nature of their rocks, renders it extremely probable, that they formerly contained subterranean fire. Setting out from the coast of the gulf of Mexico, and proceeding westward, we find the peak of Oribaza, the

two volcanos of la Puebla, the Nevado de Toluca, the peak of Tancitaro, and the volcano of Colima. These great heights, instead of forming the ridge of the cordillera of Anahuack, and following its direction, which is from S. E. to N. W. are, on the contrary, in a line perpendicular to the axis of the great chain of mountains. It is certainly worthy remark, that in the year 1759 the new volcano of Jorullo was formed in the continuation of this line, and on the same parallel as the ancient Mexican volcanos.

A view of my plan of the environs of Jorullo will show, that the six large hummocks have risen out of the earth on a vein, that crosses the plain from the cerro of las Cuevas to the pichaco del Montero. The new mouths of Vesuvius, too, are found ranged along a fissure. Do not these analogies give us reason to suppose, that there exists in this part of Mexico, at a great depth within the earth, a fissure stretching from east to west through a space of 137 leagues [343 miles] and through which the volcanick fire has made its way at different times, bursting the outer crust of porphyritick rocks, from the coasts of the gulf of Mexico to the South Sea? Is this fissure prolonged to that little groupe of islands, called by Colluet, the Archipelago of Regigedo, and round which, in the same parallel with the Mexican volcanos, pumice stone has been seen floating? Naturalists who distinguish the facts offered by descriptive mineralogy from theoretical reveries concerning the primitive state of our planet, will pardon me for having consigned these observations to the general map of New Spain, contained in the Mexican Atlas.

Some curious Particulars concerning the Discovery, peculiar Properties, &c. of certain Vegetable productions.

THE SENSITIVE PLANT.

THE sensitive plant is well known by the peculiar property which it has of giving indications of sensibility, nay almost of life, when touched by any substance. M. M. Dufay and Duhamel, two ingenious Frenchmen, have bestowed particular attention on the phenomena of this plant, and have enriched the memoirs of the Royal Academy of Sciences, for 1736, with the curious result of the experiments they made upon the subject. Their experiments drew the following lines from the pen of Voltaire :—

Le sage Dufay parmi ses plants divers;
Végétaux rassemblés des bouts de l'univers,
Me dira-t-il, pourquoi la tendre Sensitive
Se flettrit sous nos mains, honteuse et fugitive ?

A princess, who was acquainted with the peculiar property of this simple, persuaded her maids of honour, while taking the air with them in a garden where the sensitive plant was very abundant, that it would only recede from the touch of such as had forfeited their virginity. "In proof of what I say," she added, "you will perceive that when I, who am a married woman, touch it, the plant will shrink." The result of course verified the prediction, and much astonished the ladies. But their surprise was increased, when one among them, a reputed virgin, having laid her finger on the leaf, caused it to draw back. We doubt much whether the other damsels followed up the experiment.

ORIENTAL SENSITIVE PLANT.

In the East Indies grows another species of sensitive plant, which not only inclines its leaves when touched by any foreign substance, but turns its stock in conformity to the course of the sun, in the same manner as the

sunflower. A philosopher of Malabar, like a second Aristotle, ran mad because he could not explain the origin of this plant's singular properties.

THE MOVING PLANT.

Nature, ever admirable in her productions, possesses treasures in all countries. There has long been cultivated in our botanical gardens, a perfect vegetable prodigy, called "the Moving Plant." Some superstitious persons have attributed extraordinary virtues and qualities to the moving plant. June 15, a plant of this species was fifteen inches in height: its motions which are truly singular, did not commence until the middle of May, in the same year. These motions proceed from an internal impetus, whereas those of the sensitive plant are the result of external impulsion. The operations of this singular plant, are impeded by a tolerably strong blast of wind, which has the effect of instantaneously suspending its movements and agitations. The moving plant has its leaves divided into three parts. The extremity of the leaf is broad, and from the different positions which it assumes during the day, it is evident that the course of the sun has a strong influence upon it. Its most remarkable movements are collateral, but they do not always exactly accord with the motion of the great planet.

QUINQUINA.

The following is a brief history of this plant. A considerable time previous to the arrival of the Europeans, chance made the Indians acquainted with the febrifuge virtues of Quinquina. They long withheld the secret from the knowledge of the Spaniards, whom they detested; and it was not until the year 1640

that any of the article was brought to Europe. Although as a remedy in feverish cases, quinquina is now accounted infallible; a considerable period elapsed before it obtained any repute. The vice-queen being attacked by a violent fever, the corregidor of Loxa sent her some of the drug, which she took, and was speedily cured; after which she distributed it among her friends; who denominated it "The Countess's Powder." About the year 1649, the procurator-general of the Jesuits in America visited Europe, and on his arrival at Rome, prevailed upon the members of his order to give publicity to this specifick, of which he had provided himself with a large stock. Every Jesuit now cured fevers as it were by the power of magick. The quinquina, accordingly, received a new name, and was thenceforward called "The Powder of the Fathers," or, "Jesuit's Bark." Some physicians, who were wholly unacquainted with the peculiar virtues of the remedy, ridiculed and decried the use of it, and, indeed, the high price at which the Jesuits sold it tended not a little to impede its dissemination. It was at this period, that Italy was deluged with pamphlets under the titles of "The Funeral of Quinquina," "The Resurrection of Quinquina," &c. &c.—In 1679, however, one Talbot, an Englishman, by dint of vaunting the utility of this specifick, and exaggerating its admirable properties, succeeded in once more bringing it into vogue. In the following year, a comedy in three acts was brought out at the ancient Italian theatre, entitled, "The English Nostrum, or Harlequin Prince of Quinquina." A new secret was now founded upon this famous drug, which Lewis XIV. purchased at an enormously high price. At the present day, however, every apothecary's apprentice is acquainted with the uses of Jesuit's bark.

CHINESE PRODUCTION,

Alternately Plant and Animal.

Hias-Taa-Tomchom, is the name of the most extraordinary plant that has hitherto been discovered in China. The appellation implies, that during the summer the plant is a vegetable, but that at the approach of winter it becomes a worm; and, indeed, on closely inspecting it, nothing can be conceived to present a more lively representation of a small reptile than it does. The colour is a dirty yellow, its length about nine inches, and the head, body, eyes, legs, and both sides of the trunk appear to be most accurately formed. This plant grows in Tibet, and is very rare. Its medicinal virtues are nearly the same as those of ginseng, with this difference, that, like the latter, the frequent use of it does not engender hemorrhage; it fortifies the stomach, and is a grand restorative of debilitated constitutions. The manner in which the Chinese administer it is this: they take five drams of the plant, root and all, with which they stuff the craw of a duck, and roast the latter by a slow fire. When the bird is dressed, the drug is taken out, its virtue being transfused into the flesh of the duck, which is to be eaten morning and evening, for the space of ten days. This remedy is never employed except at the court of Pekin, on account of the great rarity of the plant.

EUROPEAN PRODUCTIONS

Not inferiour to the Chinese: or Animals the Offspring of Plants, and vice versa.

This Chinese Hias-Taa-Tomchom may be thought sufficiently wonderful; but the wonder it excites will be abated by our ascribing the notion of a change so extraordinary to the inaccurate observation and unphilosophical speculations of the oriental naturalists. Well, then, it is but justice to those sages to inquire what have been the opinions or con-

jectures of our better instructed westerns, on a like subject.

Linneus, in his *Dissertation, Mundum invisibilem breviter delineatura*, 1767, announced to the world, that the mealy dust, produced by the puff-balls [*lycoperdons*] agaricks, and other champignons, was the true seed of those plants; but that if this seed was placed in lukewarm water during several days, minute worms, visible by the microscope, would issue from them, which speedily congregated into a small mass, in which they remained without further motion, and from which, at length, grew champignons of the very same species as that which had furnished the seed.

In 1768, Mr. Wilkes, in England, published accounts of another experiment made on the mealy dust of mushrooms. Having taken off the inferior pellicle of the meadow mushroom, which is eaten, he placed a quantity of it in water, which became of a reddish colour. A drop of this water, examined by the microscope, appeared to contain a great quantity of seeds of those champignons, in

the form of reddish globules, each of which had a black speck. Three days afterwards these globules assumed a very lively, spontaneous motion, and Mr. Wilkes conceived that he saw several of these animalcules, being assembled together and united, shoot out a kind of roots; from whence he concludes that there are many similarities between the mushrooms and zoophytes, or animal plants.

We cannot help wishing that this experiment had been completed; and that these roots had been traced to their entire conversion into mushrooms of the several species submitted to this process. Certainly, the observations of Mr. Wilkes support those of Linneus. Spontaneous motion is not ascribed to the Chinese article; but under the hands of our European naturalists, we should long ago have had dissections of the worm; and have watched its return to its plant state, as we now do the transformations of caterpillars, moths, &c. from the state of grubs and worms, to that of flying insects.

A RECEIPT TO MAKE A NOVEL, BY MRS. GLASSE.

THIS dish is of a miscellaneous kind, something between a Yorkshire *Pie* and *Salmagundi*. Take two young lovers, tender and soft, that have been bred in an old castle; let the one be a philosopher of the new school without morals, and the other a girl of infinite sensibility without a grain of discretion or common sense. Stuff them with the minced meat of stale sentiment, and season them with box lobby repartees, and bon mots from modern comedies and farces. Then you may put them in the *stewing-pan* of persecution, and keep them a long time in the hot water of distress. Instead of sour crout and elder vinegar, mix them up with a couple of crusty fathers

and mothers, and a tough aunt or two: if you put a parson, or a justice of peace, into this olio, be sure to pepper them well. To improve the richness of the flavour, mix a good deal of French or German cabbage, and you may throw in a few mushrooms of poetry. When ready to be served up, put the whole, like *main-tenon cutlets*, in hot-pressed wirewove or *foolscap paper*. This dish will appear to most advantage upon the table if garnished, like, a twelfth cake, with devices, in paste, of a setting sun, a rising moon, a few cooing doves, a cascade, a troop of banditti, a grotto, and a ghost. Although the cook sometimes forgets to put in both the *sage* of sound ob-

servation, and the *salt* of genuine wit, this dish is the ton at Bath, Ramsgate, Margate, and all other watering-places. Like flummery or trifle, it will keep only a few days, though the cook may take great pains to set it off with the *puff paste* of advertisements.

N. B. This is the receipt, according to which many novels in the last fifty years have been cooked up; and it has been found to succeed much better than spinning jennies, or the famous mill to grind verses.

ACCOUNT OF THE FEJEE ISLANDS.

[From the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*.]

ON the 7th of October, 1809, which was shortly after the arrival at the Fejees of the *Favourite*, capt. Campbell, Mr. Thomas Smith, his second officer, was unexpectedly made prisoner by the natives, with seven others of the ship's company, and remained nine days in captivity; during which interval he experienced and witnessed horrors, from his narrative of which the following account is accurately deduced.

It begins with stating, that on the 7th of October he went from Sandalwood Bay round to the Bay of Highlea, with three boats, in quest of Sandalwood, one of which, the ship's long-boat, he commanded; another, a whale-boat, was under the command of a Mr. Lockerby, formerly chief officer of the American ship, *Jenny*; and the third, under Mr. Graham, who fortunately returned laden to the vessel in time to escape the calamities that fell upon the former two. At Highlea he heard that Bullandam, the chief of the district of Buya, was expected with a force to make war upon the island of Taffere or Taffeia, and that it was the intention of the Highleans to aid his enterprise. The next morning the two boats prepared to return to the vessel, but were cut off by Bullandam's fleet of canoes, 140 in number, orderly advancing in a semicircle; and finding it impossible to pass them, it was considered as advisable to bear up to the fleet, ho-

ping by such display of confidence to preserve the lives of the crews. When within hail they were ordered to advance; but the whaleboat was prevented by a large canoe bearing down and running aboard, cutting her in two. Mr. Lockerby and the crew were picked up and made prisoners, and Mr. Smith and the long boat's people were made prisoners likewise. The captors were about to despatch some of the people with their spears and clubs, but were prevented by the chief commanding the canoe, until the superiour chief should be consulted. When presented to Bullandam, he proposed to employ them in his intended assault against Taffere, in which he proposed to himself much assistance from their muskets; and seemed much disappointed when informed that the powder was spoilt, and the guns useless. He had no wish, however, to commit any personal injury on his prisoners; but, on the contrary, showed some attention to Mr. Smith, whom he respected as an officer, and generally invited to accompany him when he went on shore, always endeavouring to sooth his apprehensions, and quiet his solicitude of returning with his companions to the ship, by an assurance that as soon as the island of Taffere was subjugated, and its inhabitants destroyed, he would employ all his subjects in procuring wood for the vessel, to which they should be returned in safety.

On the 11th of October, the junction of forces being thoroughly arranged, an immense fleet of canoes sailed from Highlea for the expedition, and having a fresh head-wind, the canoes were set to windward by poles, at the rate of three knots an hour. At night the formidable armament came to, round the north-east part of the island; and Bullandam took Mr. Smith on shore, to pass the night with him; his night guard consisting of ten men armed with spears and arrows.

Early in the morning of the 12th the whole of the army returned to their canoes, which, on a signal from Bullandam, set forward in complete order; and in about three in the afternoon the fleet anchored abreast of a village in Taffere, the van coming to close action with a fleet belonging to the island.

The attack was made with arrows at a distance; and as the canoes of Taffere maintained their position, they soon closed, when a desperate and stubborn conflict with spears commenced. The islanders, however, at length gave way to numbers very far superiour, and, to escape an otherwise certain destiny, all leaped into the water, and swam towards the shore, from which a division of Bullandam's fleet was endeavouring to cut them off. The canoes were taken possession of, with only one captive, an unfortunate boy, who being presented to the relentless chief, was ordered to be slaughtered, as it was his determination that not a single life should be spared. This ruthless sentence was immediately executed with a club, three blows from which the youthful sufferer endured, and then expired. The body was afterwards given into the charge of an attendant, to be roasted for the chief and his principal associates. The horrors that immediately succeeded the defeat, the most sensible imagination can but faintly represent. A massacre was determined on; and as the men had escaped the fury of

their conquerors by flight, the women and children became the chief object of search; on which mission a canoe was despatched, and unhappily the fatal discovery was very soon made. On a signal from the shore, numbers landed, and a hut was set fire to, probably as a signal for the work of destruction to commence. Within a cluster of mangroves the devoted wretches had taken sanctuary. Many might undoubtedly have secured themselves by accompanying the flight of their vanquished husbands and relatives, could they have consented to a separation from their helpless children, who were no less devoted than themselves. A dreadful yell was the forerunner of the assault. The ferocious monsters rushed upon them with their clubs, and without regard to sex or infancy, promiscuously butchered all. Some who still had life and motion were treated as dead bodies, which were mostly dragged to the beach by one of their limbs, and through the water into the canoes. Their groans were disregarded, and their unheeded, protracted sufferings were still more hurtful to the feelings of humanity than even the general massacre itself had been. Among the slaughtered were some few men whose age, perhaps, had prevented their flight; but, in fact, so sudden and so dreadful was the consternation that succeeded the defeat of the unhappy natives of Taffere, as no doubt to paralyse the minds of the wretched creatures, when prompt consideration could alone be serviceable to their deplorable condition. The conquerors appeared to anticipate, with inordinate delight, the festival with which this sad event had gratified their horrible expectation. Forty-two bodies were extended on one platform in Bullandam's canoe; and one of these, a young female, appearing most to attract his attention, he desired that his second in command would have it laid by for themselves.

The Tafferians being wholly defeated and dispersed, the island was taken possession of by Bullandam's forces, which were very numerous. This principal chief invited Mr. Smith on shore, as he seemed inclined to show him favour; and Mr. Smith declares it to be one of the most beautiful places he had ever seen. The houses, in number about a hundred, ranged on the declivity of a hill, interspersed with cocoa-nut, bread-fruit, and other trees, and each house defended with a wall of piled stone. The buildings were, however, all set fire to by Bullandam's order; and Mr. Smith becoming solicitous for his release, was informed by the chief, that as soon as all the victims were devoured, he should be set at liberty with his companions. The dead bodies were got into the canoes, and the whole fleet left Taffere on their return to the main island, where many others joined in the horrible festivity, which was conducted with rude peals of acclamation. Mr. Smith was, on this occasion, also taken on shore by the great chief, and here had again to experience a detestable spectacle. The bodies had been dismembered of their limbs, which were suspended on the boughs of trees in readiness for cookery; and afterwards part of a human leg was offered to Mr. Smith, who had never broke his fast for five days. The offer he rejected with abhorrence; and upon his captors appearing astonished at the refusal, he gave them to understand, that if he ate of human flesh he would instantly die. They were satisfied with this excuse, and continued their abominable festivity the whole night.

On the 15th, the chief in the canoe that captured Mr. Smith's boat, applied to Bullandam for the prisoners, and the long boat, in order to return them to their ship, declaring his intention to demand three whale teeth and twelve hatchets for their ransom; but this proposal was not then at-

tended to. Twenty or thirty men then arrived at the place of rendezvous, each bringing a basket of human flesh half roasted; which mode, Mr. Smith learnt, they took to preserve it. The day of deliverance at length approached from a captivity the most afflicting, from a diversity of causes, that man could be exposed to; and after enduring it nine days, and totally fasting, he was at length turned over to the charge of the chief of Niri, with orders to demand the ransom for himself, and six of his companions. But previous to quitting the voracious party, a new incident of cruelty occurred.—One of the unfortunate inhabitants of Taffere had swum from his distressed island to the main, but was perceived as soon as he gained the shore, and was in consequence pursued by a multitude, armed with bows and arrows, spears and clubs. The pursuit terminated with the life of the wretched fugitive, whose body presented a new source of exultation and cannibal festivity.

On the 16th, Mr. Smith was restored to his overjoyed shipmates, with all his companions except two, one of whom was Mr. Lockerby, who were afterwards indebted for their rescue to a determined perseverance in the captain, his officers, and people, which was highly creditable and meritorious. Mr. Smith, Mr. Lockerby, and all the others, had been repeatedly on the very point of assassination, to which these people seem to possess no kind of repugnance whatsoever; but on the contrary, it appears their chief object of delight. Their determined obstinacy in effecting every thing they attempt, can alone be equalled by the extraordinary precision of their arrangements, which are planned methodically, and executed with an energy and calmness that surprise even a European; with strength of body they possess a thorough contempt of danger, and a heedlessness of pain. Their present

conqueror, Bullandam, has already become terrible, and bids fair to possess himself of the sole sovereignty of the islands. But though implacable and sanguinary in his

resentments, yet we are assured that in his disposition, strong traces of kindness were perceivable towards all except the enemies of his arms.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

SIR,

AMONG the numerous superstitious absurdities which, at no very remote period, prevailed, even among the learned, but which reason and good sense have now happily banished, none was more ridiculous than that of the scrofula, or king's evil, being cured by the royal touch. Whether our monarchs themselves believed they possessed this miraculous power of healing, or whether they spread this deception to dupe the people into a belief of their divine right, they universally laid claim to it, from Edward the confessor, down to the last of the race of Stuart. It does not appear that any of the house of Brunswick have asserted this royal function; at least, it has never been publicly announced, as was formerly the practice; but were his present majesty to resume it, such faith is yet put in the assertion of a king, that *all the courtiers*, and the great body of the ignorant multitude, would not hesitate to believe its infallibility. The last sovereign who appears to have exercised this miraculous gift, was queen Anne. In the Royal Gazette of March 12, 1712, appears the following publick notice:

"It being her majesty's royal intention to touch publicly for the evil the 17th of this instant, March, and so to continue for some time, it is her majesty's command, that tickets be delivered the day before, at Whitehall, and that all persons bring a certificate, signed by the minister and church-wardens of their respective parishes, that they never received the royal touch."

Wiseman, serjeant-surgeon to
VOL. IV: 2 Y

Charles II. gives, in a most reputable work on surgery, a treatise on the king's evil, in which he speaks of the royal touch in the following terms: "I have myself been a frequent eye-witness of many hundreds of cures performed by his majesty's touch alone, without the assistance of chirurgery, and those, many of them, such as had tired out the endeavours of able chirurgeons before they came thither. It were endless to relate what I myself have seen, and what I have received acknowledgments of by letter, not only from the several parts of this nation, but also from Ireland, Scotland, Jersey, and Germany." It was the office of Mr. Wiseman, as serjeant-surgeon, to select such afflicted objects as were proper to be presented for the royal touch. In the history of the disease, when describing its various states and appearance, he says: "Those which we present to his majesty are chiefly such as have this sort of tumour about the *musculus mastoideus*, or neck, with whatever circumstances they are accompanied; nor are we difficult in admitting the thick-chapped upper lips, and eyes afflicted with a *lipspitudo*. In other cases we give our judgments more warily." Serjeant-surgeon Wiseman says, elsewhere: "In case of the king's touch, the resolution doth often happen where our endeavours have signified nothing; yea, the very *gummata*; inso-much that I am cautious in predicting concerning them, although they appear never so bad, until fourteen days be over."

Scepticks deny their belief to mi-

racles, from their not being duly attested; but is it possible to desire a more satisfactory testimony of these miraculous cures, than that of a man of science and respectability, under whose immediate inspection they were performed, and who has "himself been a frequent eye-witness of many hundreds of cures performed by his majesty's touch alone."

The honourable Daine Barrington, in his observations on the more ancient statutes, inserts what he heard from an old man, a witness in a cause, with regard to this miraculous power of healing. The following are judge Barrington's words.

"He had, by his evidence, fixed the time of a fact, by queen Anne's having been at Oxford, and touched him, whilst a child, for the evil. When he had finished his evidence, I had an opportunity of asking him, whether he was really cured? Upon which he observed, with a significant smile, 'that he believed himself never to have had a complaint that deserved to be considered as the evil; but that his parents were poor, and had no objection to the bit of gold.'

"It seems to me, that this piece of gold which was given to those who were touched, accounts for the great resort, on this occasion, and the supposed afterwards miraculous cures."

Gemelli, the famous traveller, gives an account of 1600 persons offering themselves to be cured of the evil by Louis XIV. on Easter Sunday, in the year 1686. Gemelli himself was present at the ceremony, and says, the words used were: "*Le Roy te touche, Dieu te guerisse.*" Every Frenchman received fifteen sous, and every foreigner thirty. To some of the supposed patients the king said: *Etes-vous malade aussi?*

This power of healing by the kings of France, occasioned great

resort to Francis I. while prisoner at Madrid, by the Spaniards, who had not such faith in the efficacy of their own king's touch.

It appears, by a proclamation of James I. March 25, 1617, that the kings of England would not permit any resort to them for these miraculous cures in the summer-time. By another proclamation, of the 18th of June, 1626, it is ordered that no one shall apply for this purpose, who does not bring a proper certificate that he has never been touched before; and the same, it has already been seen, were the terms on which queen Anne granted her *royal touch*. This regulation, undoubtedly, must have arisen from some supposed patients who had attempted to receive the bit of gold more than once.

In a prayer-book printed in the year 1708, is a form of the church-service for the occasion of the royal touch. After the Lord's prayer, it is stated: "Then shall the infirm persons, one by one, be presented to the queen; and while the queen is laying her hands upon them, and is putting the gold about their necks, the chaplain that officiates, turning himself to her majesty, shall say these words following: '**God** give a blessing to this work! and grant that these sick persons on whom the queen lays her hands may recover, through Jesus Christ our Lord!'—After some other prayers, the chaplain, standing with his face towards them that come to be healed, shall say: '**The Almighty God**, who is a most strong tower to all them that put their trust in him, to whom all things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, do bow and obey, be evermore your defence; and make you know and feel that there is none other name under heaven given to man, and through whom you may receive health and salvation, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! Amen.'"

Yours, &c.

J. BANNANTINE.

FROM THE LITERARY PANORAMA.

HAY-MARKET THEATRE.

A NEW play, in five acts, entitled THE DOUBTFUL SON, was presented to the publick July 4, at this theatre, of which the Dramatis Personæ, and the fable, are as follow:

Alfonso (Marquis of Lerida)	Mr. C. Kemble.
Leon (his reputed son)	Mr. Abbott.
Malvogli (a Portuguese)	Mr. Sowerby.
Borrachio . . .	Mr. Farley.
Fabuletto . . .	Mr. Bannister.
Vasquez . . .	Mr. Menage.
Notary . . .	Mr. Carr.
Victoria of Lerida	Mrs. Glover.
Rosaviva . . .	Miss H. Kelly.
Floribel . . .	Mrs. Gibbs.

Alfonso, a Spanish marquis, suspects that his wife's son, Leon, is not his own. His suspicions are just, but are perverted by Malvogli, a Portuguese artful adventurer, who has wound himself into his confidence and is in a fair way, both of disinheriting the young man and depriving him of Rosaviva, his mistress, the marquis's ward. Things are in this train, and all is agitation and perplexity to the family, and expectation to the adventurer, when a mysterious unknown makes his appearance, alarms the plotter, and gives hope to the servants of the house, who detest and suspect him. This stranger, Borrachio, knows so much of the man, that it is necessary for the latter to bribe him with a promise of half the dowry he is to receive with the marquis's ward, and to promise it too by a certain time in the evening after the contraction of their marriage. The wedding ceremony approaches; the marquis, in order to wreak his revenge on his wife, summons her to witness it; but previously, while they are alone, discloses to her his knowledge of her son's father. The lady acknowledges her concealment of the truth, but alleges that her son is,

nevertheless, legitimate, a circumstance which she was compelled, by a harsh father, to conceal, at the time when her first husband died, and she was married to the marquis. Her husband instantly relents; but finds it difficult to believe the insinuations of the family against his favourite, who is charged by the marchioness with having known the whole truth and artfully hindering her from disclosing it. At this juncture he enters to meet his bride; is charged with his villany; and stoutly denies it; when he is interrupted by Borrachio, who, by a contrivance of Fabuletto, had not received the promised message, and coming to threaten in consequence, falls into a snare himself. This man, it appears, is the brother adventurer of Malvogli. He had been cheated of their mutual plunder, and afterwards stabbed by him and left for dead, but finds him out at this critical moment, just in time to blast his hopes, share his punishment, and restore the peace of the abused family.

Our readers will perceive that the plot has something of the manner of the German drama about it. But, in many respects, it more than once reminded us of something better, viz. a certain play written by the prince of French comick poets: we mean Moliere's Tartuffe. However, there is a degree of probability in the plot, which, though bordering on the romantick, laid fast hold of the audience, and rivetted their attention to the very end of the last act. This, we must acknowledge, is so uncommon at present with dramatick writers, that we cannot refrain from begging Mr. Dimond to accept our mite of approbation, and though there are, occasionally, some true German touches in the language, as for instance, "Earthquakes, fatal to his native Lisbon, pursue and overwhelm him"—yet upon the

whole, the language and the skilful management of the business of the scene, are above the dramattick level of these latter days, and *The Doubtful Son* is justly entitled to praise.

Let us hear what Mr. Dimond himself says of it, who has published his production under the title of *THE DOUBTFUL SON, or Secrets of a Palace. A Play in Five Acts*, as acted at the Theatre Royal in the Hay-Market, with *general** applause. By William Dimond, Esq. Wyatt, London, 1810. Price 2s. 6d.

PREFACE.

A very old Spanish romance, perused by me in childhood, the title of which I have long since forgotten, though the incidents have still lingered upon recollection, afforded a ground work to the present drama.

During a period of severe indisposition, when occupation and pleasure were equally removed from my pursuit, I lessened the weight of some heavy hours, by retracing the half-faded impressions of an earlier age, and arranging them into a dramattick shape.

As I have never written *intentionally*, for the publick, and *am*, altogether, *careless of a literary reputation*, my play, as soon as finished, was cast aside as an object of no further regard, and without any idea to its future performance upon the stage. Accident, some time afterwards, placed in my hand a French comedy by Beaumarchais, in which I discovered the identical circumstances I had adopted from romance, to have been already appropriated with success to a dramattick purpose.

The approbation of a Parisian *Parterre*, has frequently been found but an equivocal guide to the taste and temper of English audiences.—However, I was induced by this discovery to reconsider my own drama with a more favourable attention.—Upon a comparison of the two plays with each other, I inclined to an opinion, that Beaumarchais had managed the opening of his plot with more adroitness than I had employed. Under this impression, I cancelled the greater portion of the two first acts in my own drama, and introduced as much as possible, both of the action and expression of the French author in their room.

The character of Borrachio is of my original invention, and the entire agency of my three latter acts is also a creation of my fancy, with only one trivial reference either to Spanish or French design.—I have modelled the progress of the plot according to classical rules, and the unities of time and place have been strictly preserved.

The popularity which the “*Doubtful Son*” has obtained in representation, leaves me no motive for regret that I suffered him to be drawn from my port-folio on the stage. Each theatrical critick, whose opinion possesses any esteem in society, has individually published his commendation of the play. I should therefore offer but an ill requital to the world for so particular a fit of its good-nature towards me, were I, in my single person, to affect any diffidence regarding the merits of the piece. *Sincerely speaking*, I BELIEVE IT TO BE A GOOD PLAY;† *but this declaration springs from my wish to*

* It is advertised in the newspapers by the bookseller, no doubt in compliment to the weather: “With *excessive* applause!”

† If we mistake not, a dramattick writer, in the beginning of the 17th century, or certainly at the latter end of the 16th, entitled his production: “*If this is not a Good Play, the Devil’s in’t.*”—The quaintness of the title, perhaps, prevented Mr. Dimond from quoting it altogether, though it should seem, to use the language of Mr. D. that the author, like him, “was rendered vain, before he had been told that vanity was a fault.”

beingenuous, and not from my vanity. The knowledge that I have succeeded, and the belief that I have deserved success, communicate no throb of exultation to my heart; while, on the contrary, had my drama been proved the vilest of the vile, and hooted by indignant auditors from off the stage, I should have abated no single particle from my stock of self-esteem. The *Family of Blockheads* is too numerous and too creditably established in society, to render an acknowledgment of their relationship a disgrace to any man.

I still write, because the effort of composition occasionally amuses my mind; and I continue to publish, because the world appears to receive my works with partiality. But, if I know my own heart, the feverish pride of *authorship*—its insatiate appetency for applause—its agonizing sensitiveness under reproof—*now* influences no portion of my feelings.

Once, perhaps, I felt differently.—I became an author at *fifteen*, and the eagerness of hopes and wishes is inseparable from the dawn of youth. I listened to flattery when I could not distinguish its tones from the voice of truth; and *I was rendered vain before I had been told that vanity was a fault.* A few fleeting years may not have added much to my experience, but they have stolen away nearly all my enthusiasm, and I have long since learned to estimate the usual objects of this world's ambition, even as their hollowness and insincerity deserve. The pride of *literary* distinction appears to me, beyond all others, vain and futile. What is that fame, of which the poet's heart creates its visionary mistress? A fugitive, uncertain phantom, that tempts but still eludes his living embrace, never to be yielded as a bride, till Fate has chilled his human fires, and the consciousness of his spirit has withdrawn to other worlds. Peace is the only real good; and national monuments, sha-

ded by the laurel and the bay, yield no dearer resting place to him who fain would sleep for ever, than a turf-grave clasped by osiers.

If I were to offer an *individual* tribute to the merits of each performer whose name appears affixed to my *Dramatis Personæ*, I should swell a preface into a volume. Within my own recollection of the stage, no new play has been sustained by a happier combination of talent. Perhaps I ought to particularize Mr. Sowerby, from the circumstance of his being introduced by me upon this occasion to a London audience, as a fresh candidate for its favour, and, consequently, less generally known and appreciated by the town. His performance of *Malvogli*, one of the most difficult and intricate characters of the modern stage, in my opinion, has indicated a strong *original genius* under the guidance of an *excellent judgment*, from the future development of which, the most *valuable results* may be expected.

WILLIAM DIMOND.

Temple, July 13, 1810.

We have always objected to heap fulsome incense on the performers, and, therefore, dissent strongly from this latter paragraph; and we put it to the unprejudiced judgment of our readers, whether this young man, who imitates, with no sparing imitation, both Elliston and Kemble, should be held forth to the publick as an *original genius*, with an *excellent judgment*. We do, at the same time, confess, that he exhibited proof of abilities and just discrimination; but let him take the advice of Garrick, in a conversation held by that buskin'd chief with a friend of ours, and then, in time, but only in time and by assiduity, he may attain powers to give those *valuable results* Mr. D. expects. We again repeat, that gross flattery, even to old players, is bad enough, heaven knows; but to young ones it must inevitably

prove their destruction. They can only gain the height of that, or any other profession, by incessant toil, perseverance and attention. This may, perhaps, enable them to succeed, but flattery—out upon it:

———"He does me double wrong
That wounds me with the flattery of his
tongue." *Shakspeare.*

The sentiments in this play, although they are numerous, are well expressed, and were delivered with energy;—they reflect credit on Mr. Dimond; and we regret our limits prevent us from farther quotation; but we hope the last, on the value of domestick union, will make that impression upon its hearers which the author's good intentions seem to wish.

"Thus we achieve the dearest
period of human wishes—a family

united within itself—whose happiness is founded upon mutual confidence, and cemented by reciprocal esteem."

This piece, possessing neither prologue nor epilogue, was received with unanimous applause; some beautiful new scenes graced its *entrée*.

Mr. Dimond's play is not an every day production, and, though the performers acquitted themselves with great credit, yet we should like to see it transplanted to the soil of Covent-Garden; where, aided by the first rate talents of John Kemble, Cooke, and Mrs. Siddons, *The Doubtful Son* would, with more effect,

———"blossom,
And bear his blushing honours thick upon
him."

EXPERIMENTS ON RICE PASTE.

FROM experiments lately made in France, it now appears that the rice paste, of which the Chinese make the goblets, cups, and other vessels, sometimes brought to Europe, is an artificial product whose constituent parts are at present unknown. M. Kratzenstein, of Copenhagen, it is thought, has at length determined the real nature of this substance, having given the following description of a cup made of the same:—"The substance is a fusible glass of the colour of clear jelly, which has been pressed into a mould formed of two pieces, while the paste was still soft. It is ornamented with figures and handles in relief. The sharp edge, produced by the meeting of the two pieces of the mould, is visible all round. The substance is so hard that it scratches glass. It is more difficult to cut than marble. A broken part offers a dull appearance, like dried, boiled starch, and its colour and transparency bear a strong resemblance to alabaster.

Some trials which have been made, have shown that a substance analogous to rice paste, may be prepared by melting 8 parts of oxyde of lead with 7 parts of feldspar, 4 parts of common white glass, and one part of borax; or, which is equally proper, by taking 8 parts of the oxyde of lead, 6 parts of feldspar, 3 parts of flint, and 3 parts of borax, potash, or soda.

As to the stone called *Yu*, which resembles this composition, it is only known by means of the missionaries at Peking; and as it is so highly prized on account of its beauty, its hardness, and the sound it gives when struck, it is astonishing it is not known in Europe. The missionaries wish to have it believed that *yu* is a natural stone, but the sonorousness of its substance gives reason to suppose that it is an artificial kind of glass. Although several sounding stones are known, as clinkstone, or porphyry slate, and the quartz crystals from Prieborn, the

sounds they give are by no means comparable to that of *yu*, neither can musical instruments be formed from them as from that. But that there are other sonorous stones in

China, is evident from a Chinese king in the collection of M. Binte, at Paris, which, being analysed, was found to be bituminous black marble.

POETRY.

EXAMPLE BETTER THAN PRECEPT.

[By Edward Coxe, Esq.]

MADAME CRAB, like an alderman's lady, grown fine,
Thus addressed her fat daughter—"to day with us dine,
Cousin LOBSTER, who mourns for the loss of his mother,
And CRAY-FISH in black too, his little half brother;
I expect PERIWINKLE, and COCKLE, and MUSCLE,
And OYSTER, who wags not, though all's in a bustle;
And the PRAWNS, and their miniature, that *tiny* imp,
Whom we, that are *great folks*, denominate SHRIMP:
Then hold up your head, child, and turn out your toes,
And don't waddle sideways before such smart beaux!"

The pert saucy daughter this answer returned—

"By example much more than by precept is learned;

So, if you would have me the graces display

In my walking and dancing, first show me the way;

For, believe me, I'm not quite so silly an elf,

As to mind what you say, while you waddle yourself!"

A SONG AND A LAUGH.

THE CHOICE OF A WIFE BY CHEESE.

Tune—*Nontongpaw*—By Diddin.

There lived in York, an age ago,
A man, whose name was Pimlico:
He loved three sisters passing well,

But which the best he could not tell,
These sisters three, supremely fair,
Showed Pimlico their tenderest care;
For each was elegantly bred,
And all were much inclined to wed,
And all made Pimlico their choice,
And praised him with their sweetest voice:

Young Pim, the gallant and the gay,
Like ass in doubt 'tween loads of hay,
At last resolved to gain his ease,
And choose his wife *by eating cheese*.
He wrote his card, he sealed it up,
And said with them that night he'd sup;
Desired that there might only be
Good Cheshire cheese, and but them three;

He was resolved to crown his life,
And by that means to fix his wife.
The girls were pleased at his conceit;
Each dressed herself *most beauteous neat*;
With faces full of peace and plenty,
Blooming with roses under twenty;
For surely Nancy, Betsy, Sally,
Were sweet as lillies of the valley.
To those the gay divided Pim
Come elegantly smart and trim;
When every smiling maiden, certain,
Cut of the cheese to try her fortune.

Nancy, at once, not fearing—caring
To show her saving, ate the paring;
And Bet, to show her generous mind,
Cut, and then threw away the rind,
While prudent Sarah, sure to please,
Like a clean maiden, scraped the cheese.
This done, young Pimlico replied,
"Sally I now declare my bride,
And she shall be my wedded wife,
For worse or better, for my life."

"With Nan I can't my welfare put,
For she has proved a dirty slut;
And Betsey, who has pared the rind,
Would give my fortune to the wind.
Sally the happy medium chose,
And I with Sally will repose;
She's prudent, cleanly; and the man,
Who fixes on a nuptial plan,
Can never err, if he will choose,
A wife by cheese—before he vows."

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

Articles of literary intelligence, inserted by the booksellers in the **UNITED STATES GAZETTE**, will be copied into this Magazine without further order.

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